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THE LIFE AND WORKS OF CHARLES LAMB

Charles Lamb

Edition de Luxe

THE WORKS

OF

CHARLES LAMB

Illustrated

THE LAST ESSAYS OF ELIA

WITH NOTES BY ALFRED AINGER

MRS. LEICESTER'S SCHOOL

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY
ALFRED AINGER

The Chesterfield Society

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PREFACE

BY A FRIEND OF THE LATE ELIA

THIS poor gentleman, who for some months past had been in a declining way, hath at length paid his final tribute to nature.

To say truth, it is time he were gone. The humour of the thing, if ever there was much in it, was pretty well exhausted; and a two years' and a half existence has been a tolerable duration for a phantom.

I am now at liberty to confess, that much which I have heard objected to my late friend's writings was well founded. Crude they are, I grant you—a sort of unlicked, incondite things—villainously pranked in an affected array of antique modes and phrases. They had not been *his*, if they had been other than such; and better it is, that a writer should be natural in a self-pleasing quaintness, than to affect a naturalness (so called) that should be strange to him. Egotistical they have been pronounced by some who did not know, that what he tells us, as of himself, was often true only (historically) of another; as in a former Essay (to save many instances)—where under the *first person* (his favourite figure) he shadows forth the forlorn estate of a country-boy placed at a London school, far from his friends and connections—in direct opposition to his own early history. If it be egotism to imply and twine with

his own identity the griefs and affections of another —making himself many, or reducing many unto himself—then is the skilful novelist, who all along brings in his hero or heroine, speaking of themselves, the greatest egotist of all; who yet has never, therefore, been accused of that narrowness. And how shall the intenser dramatist escape being faulty, who, doubtless under cover of passion uttered by another, oftentimes gives blameless vent to his most inward feelings, and expresses his own story modestly?

My late friend was in many respects a singular character. Those who did not like him, hated him; and some, who once liked him, afterwards became his bitterest haters. The truth is, he gave himself too little concern what he uttered, and in whose presence. He observed neither time nor place, and would e'en out with what came uppermost. With the severe religionist he would pass for a free-thinker; while the other faction set him down for a bigot, or persuaded themselves that he belied his sentiments. Few understood him; and I am not certain that at all times he quite understood himself. He too much affected that dangerous figure—irony. He sowed doubtful speeches, and reaped plain, unequivocal hatred. He would interrupt the gravest discussion with some light jest; and yet, perhaps, not quite irrelevant in ears that could understand it. Your long and much talkers hated him. The informal habit of his mind, joined to an invet-

erate impediment of speech, forbade him to be an orator; and he seemed determined that no one else should play that part when he was present. He was *petit* and ordinary in his person and appearance. I have seen him sometimes in what is called good company, but where he has been a stranger, sit silent, and be suspected for an odd fellow; till some unlucky occasion provoking it, he would stutter out some senseless pun (not altogether senseless, perhaps, if rightly taken), which has stamped his character for the evening. It was hit or miss with him; but nine times out of ten he contrived by this device to send away a whole company his enemies. His conceptions rose kindlier than his utterance, and his happiest *impromptus* had the appearance of effort. He has been accused of trying to be witty, when in truth he was but struggling to give his poor thoughts articulation. He chose his companions for some individuality of character which they manifested. Hence, not many persons of science, and few professed *literati*, were of his councils. They were, for the most part, persons of an uncertain fortune; and, as to such people commonly nothing is more obnoxious than a gentleman of settled (though moderate) income, he passed with most of them for a great miser. To my knowledge this was a mistake. His *intimados*, to confess a truth, were in the world's eye a ragged regiment. He found them floating on the surface of society; and the colour, or something else, in the weed pleased

him. The burrs stuck to him—but they were good and loving burrs for all that. He never greatly cared for the society of what are called good people. If any of these were scandalised (and offences were sure to arise) he could not help it. When he has been remonstrated with for not making more concessions to the feelings of good people, he would retort by asking, what one point did these good people ever concede to him? He was temperate in his meals and diversions, but always kept a little on this side of abstemiousness. Only in the use of the Indian weed he might be thought a little excessive. He took it, he would say, as a solvent of speech. Marry—as the friendly vapour ascended, how his prattle would curl up sometimes with it! the ligaments which tongue-tied him were loosened, and the stammerer proceeded a statist!

I do not know whether I ought to bemoan or rejoice that my old friend is departed. His jests were beginning to grow obsolete, and his stories to be found out. He felt the approaches of age; and while he pretended to cling to life, you saw how slender were the ties left to bind him. Discoursing with him latterly on this subject, he expressed himself with a pettishness, which I thought unworthy of him. In our walks about his suburban retreat (as he called it) at Shacklewell, some children belonging to a school of industry had met us, and bowed and curtseyed, as he thought, in an especial manner to *him*. "They take me for a visiting governor,"

he muttered earnestly. He had a horror, which he carried to a foible, of looking like anything important and parochial. He thought that he approached nearer to that stamp daily. He had a general aversion from being treated like a grave or respectable character, and kept a wary eye upon the advances of age that should so entitle him. He herded always, while it was possible, with people younger than himself. He did not conform to the march of time, but was dragged along in the procession. His manners lagged behind his years. He was too much of the boy-man. The *toga virilis* never sate gracefully on his shoulders. The impressions of infancy had burnt into him, and he resented the impertinence of manhood. These were weaknesses; but such as they were, they are a key to explicate some of his writings.

THE LAST ESSAYS OF ELIA

THE LAST ESSAYS OF ELIA

BLAKESMOOR IN H——SHIRE

I DO not know a pleasure more affecting than to range at will over the deserted apartments of some fine old family mansion. The traces of extinct grandeur admit of a better passion than envy: and contemplations on the great and good, whom we fancy in succession to have been its inhabitants, weave for us illusions, incompatible with the bustle of modern occupancy, and vanities of foolish present aristocracy. The same difference of feeling, I think, attends us between entering an empty and a crowded church. In the latter it is chance but some present human frailty—an act of inattention on the part of some of the auditory—or a trait of affectation, or worse, vain-glory, on that of the preacher —puts us by our best thoughts, disharmonising the place and the occasion. But wouldst thou know the beauty of holiness?—go alone on some week-day, borrowing the keys of good Master Sexton, traverse the cool aisles of some country church: think of the piety that has kneeled there—the congregations, old and young, that have found consolation there—the meek pastor—the docile parishioner. With no disturbing emotions, no cross conflicting comparisons, drink in the tranquillity of the place, till thou thy-

self become as fixed and motionless as the marble effigies that kneel and weep around thee.

Journeying northward lately, I could not resist going some few miles out of my road to look upon the remains of an old great house with which I had been impressed in this way in infancy. I was apprised that the owner of it had lately pulled it down; still I had a vague notion that it could not all have perished,—that so much solidity with magnificence could not have been crushed all at once into the mere dust and rubbish which I found it.

The work of ruin had proceeded with a swift hand indeed, and the demolition of a few weeks had reduced it to—an antiquity.

I was astonished at the indistinction of everything. Where had stood the great gates? What bounded the court-yard? Whereabout did the outhouses commence? A few bricks only lay as representatives of that which was so stately and so spacious.

Death does not shrink up his human victim at this rate. The burnt ashes of a man weigh more in their proportion.

Had I seen these brick-and-mortar knaves at their process of destruction, at the plucking of every panel I should have felt the varlets at my heart. I should have cried out to them to spare a plank at least out of the cheerful storeroom, in whose hot window-seat I used to sit and read Cowley, with the grass-plot before, and the hum and flappings of that one soli-

tary wasp that ever haunted it about me—it is in mine ears now, as oft as summer returns; or a panel of the yellow room.

Why, every plank and panel of that house for me had magic in it. The tapestried bedrooms—tapestry so much better than painting—not adorning merely, but peopling the wainscots—at which childhood ever and anon would steal a look, shifting its coverlid (replaced as quickly) to exercise its tender courage in a momentary eye-encounter with those stern bright visages, staring reciprocally—all Ovid on the walls, in colours vivider than his descriptions. Actæon in mid sprout, with the unappeasable prudery of Diana; and the still more provoking and almost culinary coolness of Dan Phœbus, eel-fashion, deliberately divesting of Marsyas.

Then, that haunted room—in which old Mrs. Battle died—whereinto I have crept, but always in the daytime, with a passion of fear; and a sneaking curiosity, terror-tainted, to hold communication with the past.—*How shall they build it up again?*

It was an old deserted place, yet not so long deserted but that traces of the splendour of past inmates were everywhere apparent. Its furniture was still standing—even to the tarnished gilt leather battledores, and crumbling feathers of shuttlecocks in the nursery, which told that children had once played there. But I was a lonely child, and had the range at will of every apartment, knew every nook and corner, wondered and worshipped everywhere.

The solitude of childhood is not so much the mother of thought as it is the feeder of love, of silence, and admiration. So strange a passion for the place possessed me in those years, that, though there lay—I shame to say how few roods distant from the mansion—half hid by trees, what I judged some romantic lake, such was the spell which bound me to the house, and such my carefulness not to pass its strict and proper precincts, that the idle waters lay unexplored for me; and not till late in life, curiosity prevailing over elder devotion, I found, to my astonishment, a pretty brawling brook had been the Lacus Incognitus of my infancy. Variegated views, extensive prospects—and those at no great distance from the house—I was told of such—what were they to me, being out of the boundaries of my Eden? So far from a wish to roam, I would have drawn, methought, still closer the fences of my chosen prison, and have been hemmed in by a yet securer cincture of those excluding garden walls. I could have exclaimed with the garden-loving poet—

> Bind me, ye woodbines, in your twines;
> Curl me about, ye gadding vines;
> And oh so close your circles lace,
> That I may never leave this place;
> But, lest your fetters prove too weak,
> Ere I your silken bondage break,
> Do you, O brambles, chain me too,
> And, courteous briars, nail me through.[1]

[1] Marvell, on Appleton House, to the Lord Fairfax.]

I was here as in a lonely temple. Snug firesides —the low-built roof—parlours ten feet by ten— frugal boards, and all the homeliness of home— these were the condition of my birth—the wholesome soil which I was planted in. Yet, without impeachment to their tenderest lessons, I am not sorry to have had glances of something beyond, and to have taken, if but a peep, in childhood, at the contrasting accidents of a great fortune.

To have the feeling of gentility, it is not necessary to have been born gentle. The pride of ancestry may be had on cheaper terms than to be obliged to an importunate race of ancestors; and the coatless antiquary in his unemblazoned cell, revolving the long line of a Mowbray's or De Clifford's pedigree, at those sounding names may warm himself into as gay a vanity as those who do inherit them. The claims of birth are ideal merely, and what herald shall go about to strip me of an idea? Is it trenchant to their swords? can it be hacked off as a spur can? or torn away like a tarnished garter?

What, else, were the families of the great to us? what pleasure should we take in their tedious genealogies, or their capitulatory brass monuments? What to us the uninterrupted current of their bloods, if our own did not answer within us to a cognate and corresponding elevation?

Or wherefore, else, O tattered and diminished 'Scutcheon that hung upon the time-worn walls of thy princely stairs, BLAKESMOOR! have I in child-

hood so oft stood poring upon thy mystic characters—thy emblematic supporters, with their prophetic "Resurgam"—till, every dreg of peasantry purging off, I received into myself Very Gentility? Thou wert first in my morning eyes; and of nights hast detained my steps from bedward, till it was but a step from gazing at thee to dreaming on thee.

This is the only true gentry by adoption; the veritable change of blood, and not as empirics have fabled, by transfusion.

Who it was by dying that had earned the splendid trophy, I know not, I inquired not; but its fading rags, and colours cobweb-stained, told that its subject was of two centuries back.

And what if my ancestor at that date was some Damœtas,—feeding flocks, not his own, upon the hills of Lincoln—did I in less earnest vindicate to myself the family trappings of this once proud Ægon? repaying by a backward triumph the insults he might possibly have heaped in his life-time upon my poor pastoral progenitor.

If it were presumption so to speculate, the present owners of the mansion had least reason to complain. They had long forsaken the old house of their fathers for a newer trifle; and I was left to appropriate to myself what images I could pick up, to raise my fancy, or to soothe my vanity.

I was the true descendant of those old W——s, and not the present family of that name, who had fled the old waste places.

Mine was that gallery of good old family portraits, which as I have gone over, giving them in fancy my own family name, one—and then another—would seem to smile, reaching forward from the canvas, to recognise the new relationship; while the rest looked grave, as it seemed, at the vacancy in their dwelling, and thoughts of fled posterity.

The Beauty with the cool blue pastoral drapery, and a lamb—that hung next the great bay window—with the bright yellow H——shire hair, and eye of watchet hue—so like my Alice!—I am persuaded she was a true Elia—Mildred Elia, I take it.

Mine, too, BLAKESMOOR, was thy noble Marble Hall, with its mosaic pavements, and its Twelve Cæsars—stately busts in marble—ranged round; of whose countenances, young reader of faces as I was, the frowning beauty of Nero, I remember, had most of my wonder; but the mild Galba had my love. There they stood in the coldness of death, yet freshness of immortality.

Mine, too, thy lofty Justice Hall, with its one chair of authority, high-backed and wickered, once the terror of luckless poacher, or self-forgetful maiden—so common since, that bats have roosted in it.

Mine, too,—whose else?—thy costly fruit-garden, with its sun-baked southern wall; the ampler pleasure-garden, rising backwards from the house in triple terraces, with flower-pots now of palest

lead, save that a speck here and there, saved from the elements, bespake their pristine state to have been gilt and glittering; the verdant quarters backwarder still; and, stretching still beyond, in old formality, thy firry wilderness, the haunt of the squirrel, and the day-long murmuring wood-pigeon, with that antique image in the centre, God or Goddess I wist not; but child of Athens or old Rome paid never a sincerer worship to Pan or to Sylvanus in their native groves, than I to that fragmental mystery.

Was it for this, that I kissed my childish hands too fervently in your idol-worship, walks and windings of BLAKESMOOR! for this, or what sin of mine, has the plough passed over your pleasant places? I sometimes think that as men, when they die, do not die all, so of their extinguished habitations there may be a hope—a germ to be revivified.

POOR RELATIONS

A POOR Relation—is the most irrelevant thing in nature,—a piece of impertinent correspondency,—an odious approximation,—a haunting conscience,—a preposterous shadow, lengthening in the noon-tide of our prosperity,—an unwelcome remembrancer,—a perpetually recurring mortification,—a drain on your purse,—a more intolerable dun upon your pride,—a drawback upon success,—a rebuke to your rising,—a stain in your blood,—a blot on your 'scutcheon,—a rent in your garment,—a death's head at your banquet,—Agathocles' pot,—a Mordecai in your gate,—a Lazarus at your door,—a lion in your path,—a frog in your chamber,—a fly in your ointment,—a mote in your eye,—a triumph to your enemy,—an apology to your friends,—the one thing not needful,—the hail in harvest,—the ounce of sour in a pound of sweet.

He is known by his knock. Your heart telleth you "That is Mr. ——." A rap, between familiarity and respect; that demands, and at the same time seems to despair of, entertainment. He entereth smiling and—embarrassed. He holdeth out his hand to you to shake, and—draweth it back again. He casually looketh in about dinner-time—when the table is full. He offereth to go away, seeing you have company—but is induced to stay. He filleth a chair, and your visitor's two children are accom-

modated at a side-table. He never cometh upon open days, when your wife says, with some complacency, "My dear, perhaps Mr. —— will drop in to-day." He remembereth birth-days — and professeth he is fortunate to have stumbled upon one. He declareth against fish, the turbot being small — yet suffereth himself to be importuned into a slice, against his first resolution. He sticketh by the port — yet will be prevailed upon to empty the remainder glass of claret, if a stranger press it upon him. He is a puzzle to the servants, who are fearful of being too obsequious, or not civil enough, to him. The guests think "they have seen him before." Every one speculateth upon his condition; and the most part take him to be a — tide-waiter. He calleth you by your Christian name, to imply that his other is the same with your own. He is too familiar by half, yet you wish he had less diffidence. With half the familiarity, he might pass for a casual dependant; with more boldness, he would be in no danger of being taken for what he is. He is too humble for a friend; yet taketh on him more state than befits a client. He is a worse guest than a country tenant, inasmuch as he bringeth up no rent — yet 'tis odds, from his garb and demeanour, that your guests take him for one. He is asked to make one at the whist table; refuseth on the score of poverty, and — resents being left out. When the company break up, he proffereth to go for a coach — and lets the servant go. He recollects your grandfather; and

will thrust in some mean and quite unimportant anecdote—of the family. He knew it when it was not quite so flourishing as "he is blest in seeing it now." He reviveth past situations, to institute what he calleth—favourable comparisons. With a reflecting sort of congratulation, he will inquire the price of your furniture: and insults you with a special commendation of your window-curtains. He is of opinion that the urn is the more elegant shape; but, after all, there was something more comfortable about the old tea-kettle—which you must remember. He dare say you must find a great convenience in having a carriage of your own, and appealeth to your lady if it is not so. Inquireth if you have had your arms done on vellum yet; and did not know, till lately, that such-and-such had been the crest of the family. His memory is unseasonable; his compliments perverse; his talk a trouble; his stay pertinacious; and when he goeth away, you dismiss his chair into a corner as precipitately as possible, and feel fairly rid of two nuisances.

There is a worse evil under the sun, and that is —a female Poor Relation. You may do something with the other; you may pass him off tolerably well; but your indigent she-relative is hopeless. "He is an old humorist," you may say, "and affects to go threadbare. His circumstances are better than folks would take them to be. You are fond of having a Character at your table, and truly he is one." But in the indications of female poverty there can

be no disguise. No woman dresses below herself from caprice. The truth must out without shuffling. "She is plainly related to the L——s; or what does she at their house?" She is, in all probability, your wife's cousin. Nine times out of ten, at least, this is the case.—Her garb is something between a gentlewoman and a beggar, yet the former evidently predominates. She is most provokingly humble, and ostentatiously sensible to her inferiority. He may require to be repressed sometimes —*aliquando sufflaminandus erat*—but there is no raising her. You send her soup at dinner, and she begs to be helped—after the gentlemen. Mr.—— requests the honour of taking wine with her; she hesitates between Port and Madeira, and chooses the former—because he does. She calls the servant *Sir;* and insists on not troubling him to hold her plate. The housekeeper patronises her. The children's governess takes upon her to correct her, when she has mistaken the piano for a harpsichord.

Richard Amlet, Esq., in the play, is a notable instance of the disadvantages to which this chimerical notion of *affinity constituting a claim to acquaintance*, may subject the spirit of a gentleman. A little foolish blood is all that is betwixt him and a lady with a great estate. His stars are perpetually crossed by the malignant maternity of an old woman, who persists in calling him "her son Dick." But she has wherewithal in the end to recompense his indignities, and float him again upon the brilliant surface,

under which it had been her seeming business and pleasure all along to sink him. All men, besides, are not of Dick's temperament. I knew an Amlet in real life, who, wanting Dick's buoyancy, sank indeed. Poor W—— was of my own standing at Christ's, a fine classic, and a youth of promise. If he had a blemish, it was too much pride; but its quality was inoffensive; it was not of that sort which hardens the heart, and serves to keep inferiors at a distance; it only sought to ward off derogation from itself. It was the principle of self-respect carried as far as it could go, without infringing upon that respect, which he would have every one else equally maintain for himself. He would have you to think alike with him on this topic. Many a quarrel have I had with him, when we were rather older boys, and our tallness made us more obnoxious to observation in the blue clothes, because I would not thread the alleys and blind ways of the town with him to elude notice, when we have been out together on a holiday in the streets of this sneering and prying metropolis. W—— went, sore with these notions, to Oxford, where the dignity and sweetness of a scholar's life, meeting with the alloy of a humble introduction, wrought in him a passionate devotion to the place, with a profound aversion from the society. The servitor's gown (worse than his school array) clung to him with Nessian venom. He thought himself ridiculous in a garb, under which Latimer must have walked erect, and in which Hooker, in

his young days, possibly flaunted in a vein of no discommendable vanity. In the depth of college shades, or in his lonely chamber, the poor student shrunk from observation. He found shelter among books, which insult not; and studies, that ask no questions of a youth's finances. He was lord of his library, and seldom cared for looking out beyond his domains. The healing influence of studious pursuits was upon him, to soothe and to abstract. He was almost a healthy man; when the waywardness of his fate broke out against him with a second and worse malignity. The father of W—— had hitherto exercised the humble profession of house-painter, at N——, near Oxford. A supposed interest with some of the heads of colleges had now induced him to take up his abode in that city, with the hope of being employed upon some public works which were talked of. From that moment I read in the countenance of the young man the determination which at length tore him from academical pursuits for ever. To a person unacquainted with our Universities, the distance between the gownsmen and the townsmen, as they are called—the trading part of the latter especially—is carried to an excess that would appear harsh and incredible. The temperament of W——'s father was diametrically the reverse of his own. Old W—— was a little, busy, cringing tradesman, who, with his son upon his arm, would stand bowing and scraping, cap in hand, to anything that wore the semblance of a gown—insensible to the

winks and opener remonstrances of the young man, to whose chamber-fellow, or equal in standing, perhaps, he was thus obsequiously and gratuitously ducking. Such a state of things could not last. W—— must change the air of Oxford, or be suffocated. He chose the former; and let the sturdy moralist, who strains the point of the filial duties as high as they can bear, censure the dereliction; he cannot estimate the struggle. I stood with W——, the last afternoon I ever saw him, under the eaves of his paternal dwelling. It was in the fine lane leading from the High Street to the back of * * * * college, where W—— kept his rooms. He seemed thoughtful, and more reconciled. I ventured to rally him—finding him in a better mood—upon a representation of the Artist Evangelist, which the old man, whose affairs were beginning to flourish, had caused to be set up in a splendid sort of frame over his really handsome shop, either as a token of prosperity or badge of gratitude to his saint. W—— looked up at the Luke, and, like Satan, "knew his mounted sign—and fled." A letter on his father's table, the next morning, announced that he had accepted a commission in a regiment about to embark for Portugal. He was among the first who perished before the walls of St. Sebastian.

I do not know how, upon a subject which I began with treating half seriously, I should have fallen upon a recital so eminently painful; but this theme of poor relationship is replete with so much matter

for tragic as well as comic associations, that it is difficult to keep the account distinct without blending. The earliest impressions which I received on this matter are certainly not attended with anything painful, or very humiliating, in the recalling. At my father's table (no very splendid one) was to be found, every Saturday, the mysterious figure of an aged gentleman, clothed in neat black, of a sad yet comely appearance. His deportment was of the essence of gravity; his words few or none; and I was not to make a noise in his presence. I had little inclination to have done so—for my cue was to admire in silence. A particular elbow-chair was appropriated to him, which was in no case to be violated. A peculiar sort of sweet pudding, which appeared on no other occasion, distinguished the days of his coming. I used to think him a prodigiously rich man. All I could make out of him was, that he and my father had been schoolfellows, a world ago, at Lincoln, and that he came from the Mint. The Mint I knew to be a place where all the money was coined—and I thought he was the owner of all that money. Awful ideas of the Tower twined themselves about his presence. He seemed above human infirmities and passions. A sort of melancholy grandeur invested him. From some inexplicable doom I fancied him obliged to go about in an eternal suit of mourning; a captive—a stately being, let out of the Tower on Saturdays. Often have I wondered at the temerity of my father, who,

in spite of an habitual general respect which we all in common manifested towards him, would venture now and then to stand up against him in some argument touching their youthful days. The houses of the ancient city of Lincoln are divided (as most of my readers know) between the dwellers on the hill and in the valley. This marked distinction formed an obvious division between the boys who lived above (however brought together in a common school) and the boys whose paternal residence was on the plain; a sufficient cause of hostility in the code of these young Grotiuses. My father had been a leading Mountaineer; and would still maintain the general superiority in skill and hardihood of the *Above Boys* (his own faction) over the *Below Boys* (so were they called), of which party his contemporary had been a chieftain. Many and hot were the skirmishes on this topic—the only one upon which the old gentleman was ever brought out—and bad blood bred; even sometimes almost to the recommencement (so I expected) of actual hostilities. But my father, who scorned to insist upon advantages, generally contrived to turn the conversation upon some adroit by-commendation of the old Minster; in the general preference of which, before all other cathedrals in the island, the dweller on the hill, and the plain-born, could meet on a conciliating level, and lay down their less important differences. Once only I saw the old gentleman really ruffled, and I remember with anguish the thought

that came over me: "Perhaps he will never come here again." He had been pressed to take another plate of the viand, which I have already mentioned as the indispensable concomitant of his visits. He had refused with a resistance amounting to rigour, when my aunt, an old Lincolnian, but who had something of this, in common with my cousin Bridget, that she would sometimes press civility out of season—uttered the following memorable application—"Do take another slice, Mr. Billet, for you do not get pudding every day." The old gentleman said nothing at the time—but he took occasion in the course of the evening, when some argument had intervened between them, to utter with an emphasis which chilled the company, and which chills me now as I write it—"Woman, you are superannuated!" John Billet did not survive long, after the digesting of this affront; but he survived long enough to assure me that peace was actually restored! and if I remember aright, another pudding was discreetly substituted in the place of that which had occasioned the offence. He died at the Mint (anno 1781) where he had long held, what he accounted, a comfortable independence; and with five pounds, fourteen shillings, and a penny, which were found in his escritoir after his decease, left the world, blessing God that he had enough to bury him, and that he had never been obliged to any man for a sixpence. This was—a Poor Relation.

DETACHED THOUGHTS ON BOOKS AND READING

To mind the inside of a book is to entertain one's self with the forced product of another man's brain. Now I think a man of quality and breeding may be much amused with the natural sprouts of his own. — *Lord Foppington, in "The Relapse."*

AN ingenious acquaintance of my own was so much struck with this bright sally of his Lordship, that he has left off reading altogether, to the great improvement of his originality. At the hazard of losing some credit on this head, I must confess that I dedicate no inconsiderable portion of my time to other people's thoughts. I dream away my life in others' speculations. I love to lose myself in other men's minds. When I am not walking, I am reading; I cannot sit and think. Books think for me.

I have no repugnances. Shaftesbury is not too genteel for me, nor Jonathan Wild too low. I can read anything which I call *a book*. There are things in that shape which I cannot allow for such.

In this catalogue of *books which are no books— biblia a-biblia*— I reckon Court Calendars, Directories, Pocket Books, Draught Boards, bound and lettered on the back, Scientific Treatises, Almanacs, Statutes at Large: the works of Hume, Gibbon, Robertson, Beattie, Soame Jenyns, and generally,

all those volumes which "no gentleman's library should be without": the Histories of Flavius Josephus (that learned Jew), and Paley's Moral Philosophy. With these exceptions, I can read almost anything. I bless my stars for a taste so catholic, so unexcluding.

I confess that it moves my spleen to see these *things in books' clothing* perched upon shelves, like false saints, usurpers of true shrines, intruders into the sanctuary, thrusting out the legitimate occupants. To reach down a well-bound semblance of a volume, and hope it some kind-hearted play-book, then, opening what "seem its leaves," to come bolt upon a withering Population Essay. To expect a Steele or a Farquhar, and find—Adam Smith. To view a well-arranged assortment of blockheaded Encyclopædias (Anglicanas or Metropolitanas) set out in an array of russia, or morocco, when a tithe of that good leather would comfortably re-clothe my shivering folios, would renovate Paracelsus himself, and enable old Raymund Lully to look like himself again in the world. I never see these impostors, but I long to strip them, to warm my ragged veterans in their spoils.

To be strong-backed and neat-bound is the desideratum of a volume. Magnificence comes after. This, when it can be afforded, is not to be lavished upon all kinds of books indiscriminately. I would not dress a set of magazines, for instance, in full suit. The dishabille, or half-binding (with Russia

backs ever) is *our* costume. A Shakspeare or a Milton (unless the first editions), it were mere foppery to trick out in gay apparel. The possession of them confers no distinction. The exterior of them (the things themselves being so common), strange to say, raises no sweet emotions, no tickling sense of property in the owner. Thomson's Seasons, again, looks best (I maintain it) a little torn and dog's-eared. How beautiful to a genuine lover of reading are the sullied leaves, and worn-out appearance, nay, the very odour (beyond russia) if we would not forget kind feelings in fastidiousness, of an old "Circulating Library" Tom Jones, or Vicar of Wakefield! How they speak of the thousand thumbs that have turned over their pages with delight!—of the lone sempstress, whom they may have cheered (milliner, or hard-working mantua-maker) after her long day's needle-toil, running far into midnight, when she has snatched an hour, ill spared from sleep, to steep her cares, as in some Lethean cup, in spelling out their enchanting contents! Who would have them a whit less soiled? What better condition could we desire to see them in?

In some respects the better a book is, the less it demands from binding. Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, and all that class of perpetually self-reproductive volumes—Great Nature's Stereotypes—we see them individually perish with less regret, because we know the copies of them to be "eterne." But where a book is at once both good and rare—where the individ-

ual is almost the species, and when *that* perishes,

> We know not where is that Promethean torch
> That can its light relumine,—

such a book, for instance, as the Life of the Duke of Newcastle, by his Duchess—no casket is rich enough, no casing sufficiently durable, to honour and keep safe such a jewel.

Not only rare volumes of this description, which seem hopeless ever to be reprinted, but old editions of writers, such as Sir Philip Sydney, Bishop Taylor, Milton in his prose works, Fuller—of whom we *have* reprints, yet the books themselves, though they go about, and are talked of here and there, we know have not endenizened themselves (nor possibly ever will) in the national heart, so as to become stock books—it is good to possess these in durable and costly covers. I do not care for a First Folio of Shakspeare. [You cannot make a *pet* book of an author whom everybody reads.] I rather prefer the common editions of Rowe and Tonson, without notes, and with *plates*, which, being so execrably bad, serve as maps or modest remembrancers, to the text; and, without pretending to any supposable emulation with it, are so much better than the Shakspeare gallery *engravings*, which *did*. I have a community of feeling with my countrymen about his Plays, and I like those editions of him best which have been oftenest tumbled about and handled.—On the contrary, I cannot read Beaumont and Fletcher but in Folio. The Octavo editions are

painful to look at. I have no sympathy with them. If they were as much read as the current editions of the other poet, I should prefer them in that shape to the older one. I do not know a more heartless sight than the reprint of the Anatomy of Melancholy. What need was there of unearthing the bones of that fantastic old great man, to expose them in a winding-sheet of the newest fashion to modern censure? what hapless stationer could dream of Burton ever becoming popular?—The wretched Malone could not do worse, when he bribed the sexton of Stratford church to let him whitewash the painted effigy of old Shakspeare, which stood there, in rude but lively fashion depicted, to the very colour of the cheek, the eye, the eyebrow, hair, the very dress he used to wear—the only authentic testimony we had, however inperfect, of these curious parts and parcels of him. They covered him over with a coat of white paint. By ——, if I had been a justice of peace for Warwickshire, I would have clapped both commentator and sexton fast in the stocks, for a pair of meddling sacrilegious varlets.

I think I see them at their work—these sapient trouble-tombs.

Shall I be thought fantastical if I confess that the names of some of our poets sound sweeter, and have a finer relish to the ear—to mine, at least—than that of Milton or of Shakspeare? It may be that the latter are more staled and rung upon in common discourse. The sweetest names, and which

carry a perfume in the mention, are, Kit Marlowe, Drayton, Drummond of Hawthornden, and Cowley.

Much depends upon *when* and *where* you read a book. In the five or six impatient minutes, before the dinner is quite ready, who would think of taking up the Fairy Queen for a stop-gap or a volume of Bishop Andrewes' sermons?

Milton almost requires a solemn service of music to be played before you enter upon him. But he brings his music, to which, who listens, had need bring docile thoughts, and purged ears.

Winter evenings—the world shut out—with less of ceremony the gentle Shakspeare enters. At such a season the Tempest, or his own Winter's Tale—

These two poets you cannot avoid reading aloud —to yourself, or (as it chances) to some single person listening. More than one—and it degenerates into an audience.

Books of quick interest, that hurry on for incidents, are for the eye to glide over only. It will not do to read them out. I could never listen to even the better kind of modern novels without extreme irksomeness.

A newspaper, read out, is intolerable. In some of the Bank offices it is the custom (to save so much individual time) for one of the clerks—who is the best scholar—to commence upon the *Times* or the *Chronicle* and recite its entire contents aloud, *pro bono publico*. With every advantage of lungs and elocution, the effect is singularly vapid. In barbers'

shops and public-houses a fellow will get up and spell out a paragraph, which he communicates as some discovery. Another follows with *his* selection. So the entire journal transpires at length by piecemeal. Seldom-readers are slow readers, and, without this expedient, no one in the company would probably ever travel through the contents of a whole paper.

Newspapers always excite curiosity. No one ever lays one down without a feeling of disappointment.

What an eternal time that gentleman in black, at Nando's, keeps the paper! I am sick of hearing the waiter bawling out incessantly, "The Chronicle is in hand, Sir."

Coming into an inn at night—having ordered your supper—what can be more delightful than to find lying in the window-seat, left there time out of mind by the carelessness of some former guest—two or three numbers of the old Town and Country Magazine, with its amusing *tête-à-tête* pictures —"The Royal Lover and Lady G——"; "The Melting Platonic and the old Beau,"—and suchlike antiquated scandal? Would you exchange it—at that time, and in that place—for a better book?

Poor Tobin, who latterly fell blind, did not regret it so much for the weightier kinds of reading—the Paradise Lost, or Comus, he could have *read* to him—but he missed the pleasure of skimming over with his own eye a magazine, or a light pamphlet.

I should not care to be caught in the serious avenues of some cathedral alone, and reading *Candide.*

I do not remember a more whimsical surprise than having been once detected—by a familiar damsel—reclined at my ease upon the grass, on Primrose Hill (her Cythera) reading—*Pamela.* There was nothing in the book to make a man seriously ashamed at the exposure; but as she seated herself down by me, and seemed determined to read in company, I could have wished it had been—any other book. We read on very sociably for a few pages; and, not finding the author much to her taste, she got up, and—went away. Gentle casuist, I leave it to thee to conjecture, whether the blush (for there was one between us) was the property of the nymph or the swain in this dilemma. From me you shall never get the secret.

I am not much a friend to out-of-doors reading. I cannot settle my spirits to it. I knew a Unitarian minister, who was generally to be seen upon Snow Hill (as yet Skinner's Street *was not*), between the hours of ten and eleven in the morning, studying a volume of Lardner. I own this to have been a strain of abstraction beyond my reach. I used to admire how he sidled along, keeping clear of secular contacts. An illiterate encounter with a porter's knot, or a bread basket, would have quickly put to flight all the theology I am master of, and have left me worse than indifferent to the five points.

There is a class of street readers, whom I can never contemplate without affection—the poor gentry, who, not having wherewithal to buy or hire a book, filch a little learning at the open stalls—the owner, with his hard eye, casting envious looks at them all the while, and thinking when they will have done. Venturing tenderly, page after page, expecting every moment when he shall interpose his interdict, and yet unable to deny themselves the gratification, they "snatch a fearful joy." Martin B——, in this way, by daily fragments, got through two volumes of Clarissa, when the stall-keeper damped his laudable ambition, by asking him (it was in his younger days) whether he meant to purchase the work. M. declares, that under no circumstance in his life did he ever peruse a book with half the satisfaction which he took in those uneasy snatches. A quaint poetess of our day has moralised upon this subject in two very touching but homely stanzas:

I saw a boy with eager eye
Open a book upon a stall,
And read, as he'd devour it all;
Which, when the stall-man did espy,
Soon to the boy I heard him call,
"You Sir, you never buy a book,
Therefore in one you shall not look."
The boy pass'd slowly on, and with a sigh
He wish'd he never had been taught to read,
Then of the old churl's books he should have had no need.

Of sufferings the poor have many,
Which never can the rich annoy.
I soon perceived another boy,
Who look'd as if he had not any
Food, for that day at least—enjoy
The sight of cold meat in a tavern larder.
This boy's case, then thought I, is surely harder,
Thus hungry, longing, thus without a penny,
Beholding choice of dainty-dressèd meat:
No wonder if he wished he ne'er had learn'd to eat.

STAGE ILLUSION

A PLAY is said to be well or ill acted, in proportion to the scenical illusion produced. Whether such illusion can in any case be perfect, is not the question. The nearest approach to it, we are told, is when the actor appears wholly unconscious of the presence of spectators. In tragedy—in all which is to affect the feelings—this undivided attention to his stage business seems indispensable. Yet it is, in fact, dispensed with every day by our cleverest tragedians; and while these references to an audience, in the shape of rant or sentiment, are not too frequent or palpable, a sufficient quantity of illusion for the purposes of dramatic interest may be said to be produced in spite of them. But, tragedy apart, it may be inquired whether, in certain characters in comedy, especially those which are a little extravagant, or which involve some notion repugnant to the moral sense, it is not a proof of the highest skill in the comedian when, without absolutely appealing to an audience, he keeps up a tacit understanding with them; and makes them, unconsciously to themselves, a party in the scene. The utmost nicety is required in the mode of doing this; but we speak only of the great artists in the profession.

The most mortifying infirmity in human nature, to feel in ourselves, or to contemplate in another, is, perhaps, cowardice. To see a coward *done to the life*

upon a stage would produce anything but mirth. Yet we most of us remember Jack Bannister's cowards. Could anything be more agreeable, more pleasant? We loved the rogues. How was this effected but by the exquisite art of the actor in a perpetual subinsinuation to us, the spectators, even in the extremity of the shaking fit, that he was not half such a coward as we took him for? We saw all the common symptoms of the malady upon him; the quivering lip, the cowering knees, the teeth chattering; and could have sworn "that man was frightened." But we forgot all the while—or kept it almost a secret to ourselves—that he never once lost his self-possession; that he let out, by a thousand droll looks and gestures—meant at *us*, and not at all supposed to be visible to his fellows in the scene, that his confidence in his own resources had never once deserted him. Was this a genuine picture of a coward? or not rather a likeness, which the clever artist contrived to palm upon us instead of an original; while we secretly connived at the delusion for the purpose of greater pleasure, than a more genuine counterfeiting of the imbecility, helplessness, and utter self-desertion, which we know to be concomitants of cowardice in real life, could have given us?

Why are misers so hateful in the world, and so endurable on the stage, but because the skilful actor, by a sort of subreference, rather than direct appeal to us, disarms the character of a great deal of its odiousness, by seeming to engage *our* compassion

for the insecure tenure by which he holds his money-bags and parchments? By this subtle vent half of the hatefulness of the character—the self-closeness with which in real life it coils itself up from the sympathies of men—evaporates. The miser becomes sympathetic; *i.e.*, is no genuine miser. Here again a diverting likeness is substituted for a very disagreeable reality.

Spleen, irritability—the pitiable infirmities of old men, which produce only pain to behold in the realities, counterfeited upon a stage, divert not altogether for the comic appendages to them, but in part from an inner conviction that they are *being acted* before us; that a likeness only is going on, and not the thing itself. They please by being done under the life, or beside it; not *to the life.* When Gattie acts an old man, is he angry indeed? or only a pleasant counterfeit, just enough of a likeness to recognise, without pressing upon us the uneasy sense of reality?

Comedians, paradoxical as it may seem, may be too natural. It was the case with a late actor. Nothing could be more earnest or true than the manner of Mr. Emery; this told excellently in his Tyke, and characters of a tragic cast. But when he carried the same rigid exclusiveness of attention to the stage business, and wilful blindness and oblivion of everything before the curtain into his comedy, it produced a harsh and dissonant effect. He was out of keeping with the rest of the *Dramatis Personæ.*

There was as little link between him and them, as betwixt himself and the audience. He was a third estate—dry, repulsive, and unsocial to all. Individually considered, his execution was masterly. But comedy is not this unbending thing; for this reason, that the same degree of credibility is not required of it as to serious scenes. The degrees of credibility demanded to the two things may be illustrated by the different sort of truth which we expect when a man tells us a mournful or a merry story. If we suspect the former of falsehood in any one tittle, we reject it altogether. Our tears refuse to flow at a suspected imposition. But the teller of a mirthful tale has latitude allowed him. We are content with less than absolute truth. 'T is the same with dramatic illusion. We confess we love in comedy to see an audience naturalised behind the scenes—taken into the interest of the drama, welcomed as bystanders however. There is something ungracious in a comic actor holding himself aloof from all participation or concern with those who are come to be diverted by him. Macbeth must see the dagger, and no ear but his own be told of it; but an old fool in farce may think he *sees something*, and by conscious words and looks express it, as plainly as he can speak, to pit, box, and gallery. When an impertinent in tragedy, an Osric, for instance, breaks in upon the serious passions of the scene, we approve of the contempt with which he is treated. But when the pleasant impertinent of comedy, in a

piece purely meant to give delight, and raise mirth out of whimsical perplexities, worries the studious man with taking up his leisure, or making his house his home, the same sort of contempt expressed (however *natural*) would destroy the balance of delight in the spectators. To make the intrusion comic, the actor who plays the annoyed man must a little desert nature; he must, in short, be thinking of the audience, and express only so much dissatisfaction and peevishness as is consistent with the pleasure of comedy. In other words, his perplexity must seem half put on. If he repel the intruder with the sober set face of a man in earnest, and more especially if he deliver his expostulations in a tone which in the world must necessarily provoke a duel, his real-life manner will destroy the whimsical and purely dramatic existence of the other character (which to render it comic demands an antagonist comicality on the part of the character opposed to it), and convert what was meant for mirth, rather than belief, into a downright piece of impertinence indeed, which would raise no diversion in us, but rather stir pain, to see inflicted in earnest upon any worthy person. A very judicious actor (in most of his parts) seems to have fallen into an error of this sort in his playing with Mr. Wrench in the farce of *Free and Easy.*

Many instances would be tedious; these may suffice to show that comic acting at least does not always demand from the performer that strict ab-

straction from all reference to an audience which is exacted of it; but that in some cases a sort of compromise may take place, and all the purposes of dramatic delight be attained by a judicious understanding, not too openly announced, between the ladies and gentlemen—on both sides of the curtain.

TO THE SHADE OF ELLISTON

JOYOUSEST of once embodied spirits, whither at length hast thou flown? to what genial region are we permitted to conjecture that thou hast flitted?

Art thou sowing thy WILD OATS yet (the harvest-time was still to come with thee) upon casual sands of Avernus? or art thou enacting ROVER (as we would gladlier think) by wandering Elysian streams?

This mortal frame, while thou didst play thy brief antics amongst us, was in truth anything but a prison to thee, as the vain Platonist dreams of this *body* to be no better than a county gaol, forsooth, or some house of durance vile, whereof the five senses are the fetters. Thou knewest better than to be in a hurry to cast off these gyves; and had notice to quit, I fear, before thou wert quite ready to abandon this fleshy tenement. It was thy Pleasure-House, thy Palace of Dainty Devices: thy Louvre, or thy White-Hall.

What new mysterious lodgings dost thou tenant now? or when may we expect thy aërial house-warming?

Tartarus we know, and we have read of the Blessed Shades; now cannot I intelligibly fancy thee in either.

Is it too much to hazard a conjecture, that (as the school-men admitted a receptacle apart for Pa-

triarchs and unchrisom Babes) there may exist—not far perchance from that store-house of all vanities, which Milton saw in visions,—a LIMBO somewhere for PLAYERS? and that

> Up thither like aërial vapours fly
> Both all Stage things, and all that in Stage things
> Built their fond hopes of glory, or lasting fame?
> All the unaccomplished works of Authors' hands,
> Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mixed,
> Damn'd upon earth, fleet thither—
> Play, Opera, Farce, with all their trumpery.—

There, by the neighbouring moon (by some not improperly supposed thy Regent Planet upon earth), mayst thou not still be acting thy managerial pranks, great disembodied Lessee? but Lessee still, and still a Manager.

In Green Rooms, impervious to mortal eye, the muse beholds thee wielding posthumous empire.

Thin ghosts of Figurantes (never plump on earth) circle thee in endlessly, and still their song is *Fie on sinful Phantasy!*

Magnificent were thy capriccios on this globe of earth, ROBERT WILLIAM ELLISTON! for as yet we know not thy new name in heaven.

It irks me to think, that, stript of thy regalities, thou shouldst ferry over, a poor forked shade, in crazy Stygian wherry. Methinks I hear the old boatman, paddling by the weedy wharf, with raucid voice, bawling "SCULLS, SCULLS!" to which, with waving hand, and majestic action, thou deignest no reply,

other than in two curt monosyllables, "No: Oars."

But the laws of Pluto's kingdom know small difference between king and cobbler; manager and call-boy; and, if haply your dates of life were conterminant, you are quietly taking your passage, cheek by cheek (O ignoble levelling of Death) with the shade of some recently departed candle-snuffer.

But mercy! what strippings, what tearing off of histrionic robes, and private vanities! what denudations to the bone, before the surly Ferryman will admit you to set a foot within his battered lighter.

Crowns, sceptres; shield, sword, and truncheon; thy own coronation robes (for thou hast brought the whole property-man's wardrobe with thee, enough to sink a navy); the judge's ermine; the coxcomb's wig; the snuff-box *à la Foppington*—all must overboard, he positively swears—and that ancient mariner brooks no denial; for, since the tiresome monodrame of the old Thracian Harper, Charon, it is to be believed, hath shown small taste for theatricals.

Ay, now 't is done. You are just boat-weight; *pura et puta anima.*

But, bless me, how *little* you look!

So shall we all look—kings and keysars—stripped for the last voyage.

But the murky rogue pushes off. Adieu, pleasant, and thrice pleasant shade! with my parting thanks for many a heavy hour of life lightened by thy harmless extravaganzas, public or domestic.

Rhadamanthus, who tries the lighter causes be-

low, leaving to his two brethren the heavy calendars —honest Rhadamanth, always partial to players, weighing their particoloured existence here upon earth,—making account of the few foibles, that may have shaded thy *real life*, as we call it (though, substantially, scarcely less a vapour than thy idlest vagaries upon the boards of Drury), as but of so many echoes, natural re-percussions, and results to be expected from the assumed extravagancies of thy *secondary* or *mock life*, nightly upon a stage—after a lenient castigation with rods lighter than of those Medusean ringlets, but just enough to "whip the offending Adam out of thee," shall courteously dismiss thee at the right hand gate—the O. P. side of Hades—that conducts to masques and merrymakings, in the Theatre Royal of Proserpine.

PLAUDITO, ET VALETO

MY acquaintance with the pleasant creature, whose loss we all deplore, was but slight.

My first introduction to E., which afterwards ripened into an acquaintance a little on this side of intimacy, was over a counter in the Leamington Spa Library, then newly entered upon by a branch of his family. E., whom nothing misbecame—to auspicate, I suppose, the filial concern, and set it a-going with a lustre—was serving in person two damsels fair, who had come into the shop ostensibly to inquire for some new publication, but in reality to have a sight of the illustrious shopman, hoping some conference. With what an air did he reach down the volume, dispassionately giving his opinion of the worth of the work in question, and launching out into a dissertation on its comparative merits with those of certain publications of a similar stamp, its rivals! his enchanted customers fairly hanging on his lips, subdued to their authoritative sentence. So have I seen a gentleman in comedy *acting* the shopman. So Lovelace sold his gloves in King Street. I admired the histrionic art, by which he contrived to carry clean away every notion of disgrace, from the occupation he had so generously submitted to; and from that hour I judged him, with no after repentance, to be a person with whom it would be a felicity to be more acquainted.

To descant upon his merits as a Comedian would be superfluous. With his blended private and professional habits alone I have to do; that harmonious fusion of the manners of the player into those of every-day life, which brought the stage boards into streets and dining-parlours, and kept up the play when the play was ended.—"I like Wrench," a friend was saying to him one day, "because he is the same natural, easy creature, *on* the stage, that he is *off*." "My case exactly," retorted Elliston—with a charming forgetfulness, that the converse of a proposition does not always lead to the same conclusion—"I am the same person *off* the stage that I am *on*." The inference, at first sight, seems identical; but examine it a little, and it confesses only, that the one performer was never, and the other always, *acting*.

And in truth this was the charm of Elliston's private deportment. You had spirited performance always going on before your eyes, with nothing to pay. As where a monarch takes up his casual abode for the night, the poorest hovel which he honours by his sleeping in it, becomes *ipso facto* for that time a palace; so wherever Elliston walked, sate, or stood still, there was the theatre. He carried about with him his pit, boxes, and galleries, and set up his portable play-house at corners of streets, and in the market-places. Upon flintiest pavements he trod the boards still; and if his theme chanced to be passionate, the green baize carpet of tragedy spon-

taneously rose beneath his feet. Now this was hearty, and showed a love for his art. So Apelles *always* painted—in thought. So G. D. *always* poetises. I hate a lukewarm artist. I have known actors—and some of them of Elliston's own stamp—who shall have agreeably been amusing you in the part of a rake or a coxcomb, through the two or three hours of their dramatic existence; but no sooner does the curtain fall with its leaden clatter, but a spirit of lead seems to seize on all their faculties. They emerge sour, morose persons, intolerable to their families, servants, etc. Another shall have been expanding your heart with generous deeds and sentiments, till it even beats with yearnings of universal sympathy; you absolutely long to go home and do some good action. The play seems tedious, till you can get fairly out of the house, and realise your laudable intentions. At length the final bell rings, and this cordial representative of all that is amiable in human breasts steps forth—a miser. Elliston was more of a piece. Did he *play* Ranger? and did Ranger fill the general bosom of the town with satisfaction? why should *he* not be Ranger, and diffuse the same cordial satisfaction among his private circles? with *his* temperament, *his* animal spirits, *his* good nature, *his* follies perchance, could he do better than identify himself with his impersonation? Are we to like a pleasant rake, or coxcomb, on the stage, and give ourselves airs of aversion for the identical character, presented to us in actual life?

or what would the performer have gained by divesting himself of the impersonation? Could the man Elliston have been essentially different from his part, even if he had avoided to reflect to us studiously, in private circles, the airy briskness, the forwardness, and 'scape-goat trickeries of the prototype?

"But there is something not natural in this everlasting *acting;* we want the real man."

Are you quite sure that it is not the man himself, whom you cannot, or will not see, under some adventitious trappings which, nevertheless, sit not at all inconsistently upon him? What if it is the nature of some men to be highly artificial? The fault is least reprehensible in *players.* Cibber was his own Foppington, with almost as much wit as Vanbrugh could add to it.

"My conceit of his person,"—it is Ben Jonson speaking of Lord Bacon,—"was never increased towards him by his *place* or *honours.* But I have, and do reverence him for the *greatness,* that was only proper to himself; in that he seemed to me ever one of the *greatest* men, that had been in many ages. In his adversity I ever prayed that Heaven would give him strength; for *greatness* he could not want."

The quality here commended was scarcely less conspicuous in the subject of these idle reminiscences than in my Lord Verulam. Those who have imagined that an unexpected elevation to the di-

rection of a great London Theatre affected the consequence of Elliston, or at all changed his nature, knew not the essential *greatness* of the man whom they disparage. It was my fortune to encounter him near St. Dunstan's Church (which, with its punctual giants, is now no more than dust and a shadow), on the morning of his election to that high office. Grasping my hand with a look of significance, he only uttered,—"Have you heard the news?"—then, with another look following up the blow, he subjoined, "I am the future manager of Drury Lane Theatre."—Breathless as he saw me, he stayed not for congratulation or reply, but mutely stalked away, leaving me to chew upon his new-blown dignities at leisure. In fact, nothing could be said to it. Expressive silence alone could muse his praise. This was in his *great* style.

But was he less *great* (be witness, O ye Powers of Equanimity, that supported in the ruins of Carthage the consular exile, and more recently transmuted, for a more illustrious exile, the barren constableship of Elba into an image of Imperial France), when, in melancholy after-years, again, much near the same spot, I met him, when that sceptre had been wrested from his hand, and his dominion was curtailed to the petty managership, and part proprietorship, of the small Olympic, *his Elba?* He still played nightly upon the boards of Drury, but in parts, alas! allotted to him, not magnificently distributed by him. Waiving his great loss as nothing,

and magnificently sinking the sense of fallen *material* grandeur in the more liberal resentment of depreciations done to his more lofty *intellectual* pretensions, "Have you heard" (his customary exordium)—"have you heard," said he, "how they treat me? they put me in *comedy*." Thought I—but his finger on his lips forbade any verbal interruption—"where could they have put you better?" Then, after a pause—"Where I formerly played Romeo, I now play Mercutio,"—and so again he stalked away, neither staying, nor caring for, responses.

O, it was a rich scene,—but Sir A—— C——, the best of story-tellers and surgeons, who mends a lame narrative almost as well as he sets a fracture, alone could do justice to it,—that I was a witness to, in the tarnished room (that had once been green) of that same little Olympic. There, after his deposition from Imperial Drury, he substituted a throne. That Olympic Hill was his "highest heaven"; himself "Jove in his chair." There he sat in state, while before him, on complaint of prompter, was brought for judgment—how shall I describe her?—one of those little tawdry things that flirt at the tails of choruses—a probationer for the town, in either of its senses—the pertest little drab—a dirty fringe and appendage of the lamps' smoke—who, it seems, on some disapprobation expressed by a "highly respectable" audience, had precipitately quitted her station on the boards, and withdrawn her small talents in disgust.

"And how dare you," said her manager,—assuming a censorial severity, which would have crushed the confidence of a Vestris, and disarmed that beautiful Rebel herself of her professional caprices—I verily believe, he thought *her* standing before him —"how dare you, Madam, withdraw yourself, without a notice, from your theatrical duties?" "I was hissed, Sir." "And you have the presumption to decide upon the taste of the town?" "I don't know that, Sir, but I will never stand to be hissed," was the subjoinder of young Confidence—when gathering up his features into one significant mass of wonder, pity, and expostulatory indignation—in a lesson never to have been lost upon a creature less forward than she who stood before him—his words were these: "They have hissed *me*."

'T was the identical argument *à fortiori*, which the son of Peleus uses to Lycaon trembling under his lance, to persuade him to take his destiny with a good grace. "I too am mortal." And it is to be believed that in both cases the rhetoric missed of its application, for want of a proper understanding with the faculties of the respective recipients.

"Quite an Opera pit," he said to me, as he was courteously conducting me over the benches of his Surrey Theatre, the last retreat, and recess, of his every-day waning grandeur.

Those who knew Elliston, will know the *manner* in which he pronounced the latter sentence of the few words I am about to record. One proud day to

me he took his roast mutton with us in the Temple, to which I had superadded a preliminary haddock. After a rather plentiful partaking of the meagre banquet, not unrefreshed with the humbler sort of liquors, I made a sort of apology for the humility of the fare, observing that for my own part I never ate but of one dish at dinner. "I too never eat but one thing at dinner,"—was his reply—then after a pause—"reckoning fish as nothing." The manner was all. It was as if by one peremptory sentence he had decreed the annihilation of all the savoury esculents, which the pleasant and nutritious-food-giving Ocean pours forth upon poor humans from her watery bosom. This was *greatness*, tempered with considerate *tenderness* to the feelings of his scanty but welcoming entertainer.

Great wert thou in thy life, Robert William Elliston! and *not lessened* in thy death, if report speak truly, which says that thou didst direct that thy mortal remains should repose under no inscription but one of pure *Latinity*. Classical was thy bringing up! and beautiful was the feeling on thy last bed, which, connecting the man with the boy, took thee back to thy latest exercise of imagination, to the days when, undreaming of Theatres and Managerships, thou wert a scholar, and an early ripe one, under the roofs builded by the munificent and pious Colet. For thee the Pauline Muses weep. In elegies, that shall silence this crude prose, they shall celebrate thy praise.

THE OLD MARGATE HOY

I AM fond of passing my vacations (I believe I have said so before) at one or other of the Universities. Next to these my choice would fix me at some woody spot, such as the neighbourhood of Henley affords in abundance, upon the banks of my beloved Thames. But somehow or other my cousin contrives to wheedle me once in three or four seasons to a watering-place. Old attachments cling to her in spite of experience. We have been dull at Worthing one summer, duller at Brighton another, dullest at Eastbourn a third, and are at this moment doing dreary penance at—Hastings!—and all because we were happy many years ago for a brief week at Margate. That was our first sea-side experiment, and many circumstances combined to make it the most agreeable holiday of my life. We had neither of us seen the sea, and we had never been from home so long together in company.

Can I forget thee, thou old Margate Hoy, with thy weather-beaten, sun-burnt captain, and his rough accommodations—ill exchanged for the foppery and fresh-water niceness of the modern steam-packet? To the winds and waves thou committedst thy goodly freightage, and didst ask no aid of magic fumes, and spells, and boiling caldrons. With the gales of heaven thou wentest swimmingly; or, when it was their pleasure, stoodest still with sailor-like

patience. Thy course was natural, not forced, as in a hotbed; nor didst thou go poisoning the breath of ocean with sulphureous smoke—a great sea chimera, chimneying and furnacing the deep; or liker to that fire-god parching up Scamander.

Can I forget thy honest, yet slender crew, with their coy reluctant responses (yet to the suppression of anything like contempt) to the raw questions, which we of the great city would be ever and anon putting to them, as to the uses of this or that strange naval implement? 'Specially can I forget thee, thou happy medium, thou shade of refuge between us and them, conciliating interpreter of their skill to our simplicity, comfortable ambassador between sea and land!—whose sailor-trousers did not more convincingly assure thee to be an adopted denizen of the former, than thy white cap, and whiter apron over them, with thy neat-fingered practice in thy culinary vocation, bespoke thee to have been of inland nurture heretofore—a master cook of Eastcheap? How busily didst thou ply thy multifarious occupation, cook, mariner, attendant, chamberlain; here, there, like another Ariel, flaming at once about all parts of the deck, yet with kindlier ministrations—not to assist the tempest, but, as if touched with a kindred sense of our infirmities, to soothe the qualms which that untried motion might haply raise in our crude land-fancies. And when the o'erwashing billows drove us below deck (for it was far gone in October, and we had stiff

and blowing weather), how did thy officious ministerings, still catering for our comfort, with cards, and cordials, and thy more cordial conversation, alleviate the closeness and the confinement of thy else (truth to say) not very savoury, nor very inviting, little cabin!

With these additaments to boot, we had on board a fellow-passenger, whose discourse in verity might have beguiled a longer voyage than we meditated, and have made mirth and wonder abound as far as the Azores. He was a dark, Spanish-complexioned young man, remarkably handsome, with an officer-like assurance, and an insuppressible volubility of assertion. He was, in fact, the greatest liar I had met with then, or since. He was none of your hesitating, half story-tellers (a most painful description of mortals) who go on sounding your belief, and only giving you as much as they see you can swallow at a time—the nibbling pickpockets of your patience—but one who committed downright, daylight depredations upon his neighbour's faith. He did not stand shivering upon the brink, but was a hearty thorough-paced liar, and plunged at once into the depths of your credulity. I partly believe, he made pretty sure of his company. Not many rich, not many wise, or learned, composed at that time the common stowage of a Margate packet. We were, I am afraid, a set of as unseasoned Londoners (let our enemies give it a worse name) as Aldermanbury, or Watling Street, at that time of

day could have supplied. There might be an exception or two among us, but I scorn to make any invidious distinctions among such a jolly, companionable ship's company as those were whom I sailed with. Something too must be conceded to the *Genius Loci.* Had the confident fellow told us half the legends on land which he favoured us with on the other element, I flatter myself the good sense of most of us would have revolted. But we were in a new world, with everything unfamiliar about us, and the time and place disposed us to the reception of any prodigious marvel whatsoever. Time has obliterated from my memory much of his wild fablings; and the rest would appear but dull, as written, and to be read on shore. He had been Aide-de-camp (among other rare accidents and fortunes) to a Persian Prince, and at one blow had stricken off the head of the King of Carimania on horseback. He, of course, married the Prince's daughter. I forget what unlucky turn in the politics of that court, combining with the loss of his consort, was the reason of his quitting Persia; but with the rapidity of a magician he transported himself, along with his hearers, back to England, where we still found him in the confidence of great ladies. There was some story of a Princess—Elizabeth, if I remember—having intrusted to his care an extraordinary casket of jewels, upon some extraordinary occasion—but, as I am not certain of the name or circumstance at this distance of time, I must leave it to the Royal

daughters of England to settle the honour among themselves in private. I cannot call to mind half his pleasant wonders; but I perfectly remember that, in the course of his travels, he had seen a phœnix; and he obligingly undeceived us of the vulgar error, that there is but one of that species at a time, assuring us that they were not uncommon in some parts of Upper Egypt. Hitherto he had found the most implicit listeners. His dreaming fancies had transported us beyond the "ignorant present." But when (still hardying more and more in his triumphs over our simplicity) he went on to affirm that he had actually sailed through the legs of the Colossus at Rhodes, it really became necessary to make a stand. And here I must do justice to the good sense and intrepidity of one of our party, a youth, that had hitherto been one of his most deferential auditors, who, from his recent reading, made bold to assure the gentleman, that there must be some mistake, as "the Colossus in question had been destroyed long since"; to whose opinion, delivered with all modesty, our hero was obliging enough to concede thus much, that "the figure was indeed a little damaged." This was the only opposition he met with, and it did not at all seem to stagger him, for he proceeded with his fables, which the same youth appeared to swallow with still more complacency than ever,—confirmed, as it were, by the extreme candour of that concession. With these prodigies he wheedled us on till we came in sight

of the Reculvers, which one of our own company (having been the voyage before) immediately recognizing, and pointing out to us, was considered by us as no ordinary seaman.

All this time sat upon the edge of the deck quite a different character. It was a lad, apparently very poor, very infirm, and very patient. His eye was ever on the sea, with a smile; and, if he caught now and then some snatches of these wild legends, it was by accident, and they seemed not to concern him. The waves to him whispered more pleasant stories. He was as one being with us, but not of us. He heard the bell of dinner ring without stirring; and when some of us pulled out our private stores —our cold meat and our salads—he produced none, and seemed to want none. Only a solitary biscuit he had laid in; provision for the one or two days and nights, to which these vessels then were oftentimes obliged to prolong their voyage. Upon a nearer acquaintance with him, which he seemed neither to court nor decline, we learned that he was going to Margate, with the hope of being admitted into the Infirmary there for sea-bathing. His disease was a scrofula, which appeared to have eaten all over him. He expressed great hopes of a cure; and when we asked him whether he had any friends where he was going, he replied, "he *had* no friends."

These pleasant, and some mournful passages, with the first sight of the sea, co-operating with youth, and a sense of holidays, and out-of-door ad-

venture, to me that had been pent up in populous cities for many months before,—have left upon my mind the fragrance as of summer days gone by, bequeathing nothing but their remembrance for cold and wintry hours to chew upon.

Will it be thought a digression (it may spare some unwelcome comparisons) if I endeavour to account for the *dissatisfaction* which I have heard so many persons confess to have felt (as I did myself feel in part on this occasion), *at the sight of the sea for the first time?* I think the reason usually given—referring to the incapacity of actual objects for satisfying our preconceptions of them—scarcely goes deep enough into the question. Let the same person see a lion, an elephant, a mountain for the first time in his life, and he shall perhaps feel himself a little mortified. The things do not fill up that space which the idea of them seemed to take up in his mind. But they have still a correspondency to his first notion, and in time grow up to it, so as to produce a very similar impression: enlarging themselves (if I may say so) upon familiarity. But the sea remains a disappointment.—Is it not, that in *the latter* we had expected to behold (absurdly, I grant, but, I am afraid, by the law of imagination, unavoidably) not a definite object, as those wild beasts, or that mountain compassable by the eye, but *all the sea at once*, THE COMMENSURATE ANTAGONIST OF THE EARTH? I do not say we tell ourselves so much, but the craving of the mind is to

be satisfied with nothing less. I will suppose the case of a young person of fifteen (as I then was) knowing nothing of the sea, but from description. He comes to it for the first time—all that he has been reading of it all his life, and *that* the most enthusiastic part of life,—all he has gathered from narratives of wandering seamen,—what he has gained from true voyages, and what he cherishes as credulously from romance and poetry,—crowding their images, and exacting strange tributes from expectation.—He thinks of the great deep, and of those who go down unto it; of its thousand isles, and of the vast continents it washes; of its receiving the mighty Plata, or Orellana, into its bosom, without disturbance, or sense of augmentation; of Biscay swells, and the mariner

> For many a day, and many a dreadful night,
> Incessant labouring round the stormy Cape;

of fatal rocks, and the "still-vexed Bermoothes"; of great whirlpools, and the water-spout; of sunken ships, and sumless treasures swallowed up in the unrestoring depths; of fishes and quaint monsters, to which all that is terrible on earth—

> Be but as buggs to frighten babes withal,
> Compared with the creatures in the sea's entral;

of naked savages, and Juan Fernandez; of pearls, and shells; of coral beds, and of enchanted isles; of mermaids' grots——

I do not assert that in sober earnest he expects to

be shown all these wonders at once, but he is under the tyranny of a mighty faculty, which haunts him with confused hints and shadows of all these; and when the actual object opens first upon him, seen (in tame weather, too, most likely) from our unromantic coasts—a speck, a slip of sea-water, as it shows to him—what can it prove but a very unsatisfying and even diminutive entertainment? Or if he has come to it from the mouth of a river, was it much more than the river widening? and, even out of sight of land, what had he but a flat watery horizon about him, nothing comparable to the vast o'er-curtaining sky, his familiar object, seen daily without dread or amazement?—Who, in similar circumstances, has not been tempted to exclaim with Charoba, in the poem of Gebir,

Is this the mighty ocean? is this *all*?

I love town, or country; but this detestable Cinque Port is neither. I hate these scrubbed shoots, thrusting out their starved foliage from between the horrid fissures of dusty innutritious rocks; which the amateur calls "verdure to the edge of the sea." I require woods, and they show me stunted coppices. I cry out for the water-brooks, and pant for fresh streams, and inland murmurs. I cannot stand all day on the naked beach, watching the capricious hues of the sea, shifting like the colours of a dying mullet. I am tired of looking out at the windows of this island-prison. I would fain retire into the

interior of my cage. While I gaze upon the sea, I want to be on it, over it, across it. It binds me in with chains, as of iron. My thoughts are abroad. I should not so feel in Staffordshire. There is no home for me here. There is no sense of home at Hastings. It is a place of fugitive resort, an heterogeneous assemblage of sea-mews and stock-brokers, Amphitrites of the town, and misses that coquet with the Ocean. If it were what it was in its primitive shape, and what it ought to have remained, a fair, honest fishing-town, and no more, it were something—with a few straggling fishermen's huts scattered about, artless as its cliffs, and with their materials filched from them, it were something. I could abide to dwell with Mesheck; to assort with fisher-swains, and smugglers. There are, or I dream there are, many of this latter occupation here. Their faces become the place. I like a smuggler. He is the only honest thief. He robs nothing but the revenue—an abstraction I never greatly cared about. I could go out with them in their mackerel boats, or about their less ostensible business, with some satisfaction. I can even tolerate those poor victims to monotony, who from day to day pace along the beach, in endless progress and recurrence, to watch their illicit countrymen—townsfolk or brethren, perchance—whistling to the sheathing and unsheathing of their cutlasses (their only solace), who, under the mild name of preventive service, keep up a legitimated civil warfare in the deplorable absence of a foreign one,

to show their detestation of run hollands, and zeal for Old England. But it is the visitants from town, that come here to *say* that they have been here, with no more relish of the sea than a pond-perch or a dace might be supposed to have, that are my aversion. I feel like a foolish dace in these regions, and have as little toleration for myself here as for them. What can they want here? If they had a true relish of the ocean, why have they brought all this land luggage with them? or why pitch their civilized tents in the desert? What mean these scanty book-rooms—marine libraries as they entitle them—if the sea were, as they would have us believe, a book "to read strange matter in"? what are their foolish concert-rooms, if they come, as they would fain be thought to do, to listen to the music of the waves? All is false and hollow pretension. They come because it is the fashion, and to spoil the nature of the place. They are, mostly, as I have said, stock-brokers; but I have watched the better sort of them—now and then, an honest citizen (of the old stamp), in the simplicity of his heart, shall bring down his wife and daughters to taste the sea breezes. I always know the date of their arrival. It is easy to see it in their countenance. A day or two they go wandering on the shingles, picking up cockle-shells, and thinking them great things; but, in a poor week, imagination slackens: they begin to discover that cockles produce no pearls, and then—O then!—if I could interpret for the pretty creatures (I know they have

not the courage to confess it themselves), how gladly would they exchange their seaside rambles for a Sunday walk on the green sward of their accustomed Twickenham meadows!

I would ask one of these sea-charmed emigrants, who think they truly love the sea, with its wild usages, what would their feelings be if some of the unsophisticated aborigines of this place, encouraged by their courteous questionings here, should venture, on the faith of such assured sympathy between them, to return the visit, and come up to see—London. I must imagine them with their fishing-tackle on their back, as we carry our town necessaries. What a sensation would it cause in Lothbury! What vehement laughter would it not excite among

> The daughters of Cheapside, and wives of Lombard-street!

I am sure that no town-bred or inland-born subjects can feel their true and natural nourishment at these sea-places. Nature, where she does not mean us for mariners and vagabonds, bids us stay at home. The salt foam seems to nourish a spleen. I am not half so good-natured as by the milder waters of my natural river. I would exchange these sea-gulls for swans, and scud a swallow for ever about the banks of Thamesis.

THE CONVALESCENT

A PRETTY severe fit of indisposition which, under the name of a nervous fever, has made a prisoner of me for some weeks past, and is but slowly leaving me, has reduced me to an incapacity of reflecting upon any topic foreign to itself. Expect no healthy conclusions from me this month, reader; I can offer you only sick men's dreams.

And truly the whole state of sickness is such; for what else is it but a magnificent dream for a man to lie a-bed, and draw daylight curtains about him; and, shutting out the sun, to induce a total oblivion of all the works which are going on under it? To become insensible to all the operations of life, except the beatings of one feeble pulse?

If there be a regal solitude, it is a sick-bed. How the patient lords it there; what caprices he acts without control! how king-like he sways his pillow—tumbling, and tossing, and shifting, and lowering, and thumping, and flatting, and moulding it, to the ever-varying requisitions of his throbbing temples.

He changes *sides* oftener than a politician. Now he lies full length, then half length, obliquely, transversely, head and feet quite across the bed; and none accuses him of tergiversation. Within the four curtains he is absolute. They are his Mare Clausum.

How sickness enlarges the dimensions of a man's self to himself! he is his own exclusive object. Su-

preme selfishness is inculcated upon him as his only duty. 'T is the Two Tables of the Law to him. He has nothing to think of but how to get well. What passes out of doors, or within them, so he hear not the jarring of them, affects him not.

A little while ago he was greatly concerned in the event of a lawsuit, which was to be the making or the marring of his dearest friend. He was to be seen trudging about upon this man's errand to fifty quarters of the town at once, jogging this witness, refreshing that solicitor. The cause was to come on yesterday. He is absolutely as indifferent to the decision, as if it were a question to be tried at Pekin. Peradventure from some whispering, going on about the house, not intended for his hearing, he picks up enough to make him understand that things went cross-grained in the court yesterday, and his friend is ruined. But the word "friend," and the word "ruin," disturb him no more than so much jargon. He is not to think of anything but how to get better.

What a world of foreign cares are merged in that absorbing consideration!

He has put on the strong armour of sickness, he is wrapped in the callous hide of suffering; he keeps his sympathy, like some curious vintage, under trusty lock and key, for his own use only.

He lies pitying himself, honing and moaning to himself; he yearneth over himself; his bowels are even melted within him, to think what he suffers; he is not ashamed to weep over himself.

He is for ever plotting how to do some good to himself; studying little stratagems and artificial alleviations.

He makes the most of himself; dividing himself, by an allowable fiction, into as many distinct individuals as he hath sore and sorrowing members. Sometimes he meditates—as of a thing apart from him—upon his poor aching head, and that dull pain which, dozing or waking, lay in it all the past night like a log, or palpable substance of pain, not to be removed without opening the very skull, as it seemed, to take it thence. Or he pities his long, clammy, attenuated fingers. He compassionates himself all over; and his bed is a very discipline of humanity, and tender heart.

He is his own sympathizer; and instinctively feels that none can so well perform that office for him. He cares for few spectators to his tragedy. Only that punctual face of the old nurse pleases him, that announces his broths and his cordials. He likes it because it is so unmoved, and because he can pour forth his feverish ejaculations before it as unreservedly as to his bed-post.

To the world's business he is dead. He understands not what the callings and occupations of mortals are; only he has a glimmering conceit of some such thing, when the doctor makes his daily call; and even in the lines on that busy face he reads no multiplicity of patients, but solely conceives of himself as *the sick man*. To what other un-

easy couch the good man is hastening, when he slips out of his chamber, folding up his thin douceur so carefully, for fear of rustling—is no speculation which he can at present entertain. He thinks only of the regular return of the same phenomenon at the same hour to-morrow.

Household rumours touch him not. Some faint murmur, indicative of life going on within the house, soothes him, while he knows not distinctly what it is. He is not to know anything, not to think of anything. Servants gliding up or down the distant staircase, treading as upon velvet, gently keep his ear awake, so long as he troubles not himself further than with some feeble guess at their errands. Exacter knowledge would be a burthen to him: he can just endure the pressure of conjecture. He opens his eye faintly at the dull stroke of the muffled knocker, and closes it again without asking "who was it?" He is flattered by a general notion that inquiries are making after him, but he cares not to know the name of the inquirer. In the general stillness, and awful hush of the house, he lies in state, and feels his sovereignty.

To be sick is to enjoy monarchal prerogatives. Compare the silent tread and quiet ministry, almost by the eye only, with which he is served—with the careless demeanour, the unceremonious goings in and out (slapping of doors, or leaving them open) of the very same attendants, when he is getting a little better—and you will confess, that from the

bed of sickness (throne let me rather call it) to the elbow-chair of convalescence, is a fall from dignity, amounting to a deposition.

How convalescence shrinks a man back to his pristine stature! Where is now the space, which he occupied so lately, in his own, in the family's eye?

The scene of his regalities, his sick room, which was his presence-chamber, where he lay and acted his despotic fancies—how is it reduced to a common bedroom! The trimness of the very bed has something petty and unmeaning about it. It is *made* every day. How unlike to that wavy, many-furrowed, oceanic surface, which it presented so short a time since, when to *make* it was a service not to be thought of at oftener than three or four day revolutions, when the patient was with pain and grief to be lifted for a little while out of it, to submit to the encroachments of unwelcome neatness, and decencies which his shaken frame deprecated; then to be lifted into it again, for another three or four days' respite, to flounder it out of shape again, while every fresh furrow was an historical record of some shifting posture, some uneasy turning, some seeking for a little ease; and the shrunken skin scarce told a truer story than the crumpled coverlid.

Hushed are those mysterious sighs—those groans—so much more awful, while we knew not from what caverns of vast hidden suffering they proceeded. The Lernean pangs are quenched. The

riddle of sickness is solved; and Philoctetes is become an ordinary personage.

Perhaps some relic of the sick man's dream of greatness survives in the still lingering visitations of the medical attendant. But how is he, too, changed with everything else? Can this be he—this man of news—of chat—of anecdote—of everything but physic—can this be he, who so lately came between the patient and his cruel enemy, as on some solemn embassy from Nature, erecting herself into a high mediating party?—Pshaw! 'tis some old woman.

Farewell with him all that made sickness pompous—the spell that hushed the household—the desert-like stillness, felt throughout its inmost chambers—the mute attendance—the inquiry by looks—the still softer delicacies of self-attention—the sole and single eye of distemper alonely fixed upon itself—world-thoughts excluded—the man a world unto himself—his own theatre—

> What a speck is he dwindled into!

In this flat swamp of convalescence, left by the ebb of sickness, yet far enough from the terra-firma of established health, your note, dear Editor, reached me, requesting—an article. In Articulo Mortis, thought I; but it is something hard—and the quibble, wretched as it was, relieved me. The summons, unseasonable as it appeared, seemed to link me on again to the petty businesses of life,

which I had lost sight of; a gentle call to activity, however trivial; a wholesome weaning from that preposterous dream of self-absorption—the puffy state of sickness—in which I confess to have lain so long, insensible to the magazines and monarchies of the world alike; to its laws, and to its literature. The hypochondriac flatus is subsiding; the acres, which in imagination I had spread over—for the sick man swells in the sole contemplation of his single sufferings, till he becomes a Tityus to himself—are wasting to a span; and for the giant of self-importance, which I was so lately, you have me once again in my natural pretensions—the lean and meagre figure of your insignificant Essayist.

SANITY OF TRUE GENIUS

SO far from the position holding true, that great wit (or genius, in our modern way of speaking) has a necessary alliance with insanity, the greatest wits, on the contrary, will ever be found to be the sanest writers. It is impossible for the mind to conceive of a mad Shakspeare. The greatness of wit, by which the poetic talent is here chiefly to be understood, manifests itself in the admirable balance of all the faculties. Madness is the disproportionate straining or excess of any one of them. "So strong a wit," says Cowley, speaking of a poetical friend,

> "—did Nature to him frame,
> As all things but his judgment overcame;
> His judgment like the heavenly moon did show,
> Tempering that mighty sea below."

The ground of the mistake is, that men, finding in the raptures of the higher poetry a condition of exaltation, to which they have no parallel in their own experience, besides the spurious resemblance of it in dreams and fevers, impute a state of dreaminess and fever to the poet. But the true poet dreams being awake. He is not possessed by his subject, but has dominion over it. In the groves of Eden he walks familiar as in his native paths. He ascends the empyrean heaven, and is not intoxicated. He treads the burning marl without dismay; he wins his flight

without self-loss through realms of chaos "and old night." Or if, abandoning himself to that severer chaos of a "human mind untuned," he is content awhile to be mad with Lear, or to hate mankind (a sort of madness) with Timon, neither is that madness, nor this misanthropy, so unchecked, but that, —never letting the reins of reason wholly go, while most he seems to do so,—he has his better genius still whispering at his ear, with the good servant Kent suggesting saner counsels, or with the honest steward Flavius recommending kindlier resolutions. Where he seems most to recede from humanity, he will be found the truest to it. From beyond the scope of Nature if he summon possible existences, he subjugates them to the law of her consistency. He is beautifully loyal to that sovereign directress, even when he appears most to betray and desert her. His ideal tribes submit to policy; his very monsters are tamed to his hand, even as that wild sea-brood, shepherded by Proteus. He tames, and he clothes them with attributes of flesh and blood, till they wonder at themselves, like Indian Islanders forced to submit to European vesture. Caliban, the Witches, are as true to the laws of their own nature (ours with a difference), as Othello, Hamlet, and Macbeth. Herein the great and the little wits are differenced; that if the latter wander ever so little from nature or actual existence, they lose themselves and their readers. Their phantoms are lawless; their visions nightmares. They do not create, which implies shap-

ing and consistency. Their imaginations are not active—for to be active is to call something into act and form—but passive, as men in sick dreams. For the super-natural, or something super-added to what we know of nature, they give you the plainly non-natural. And if this were all, and that these mental hallucinations were discoverable only in the treatment of subjects out of nature, or transcending it, the judgment might with some plea be pardoned if it ran riot, and a little wantonized: but even in the describing of real and every-day life, that which is before their eyes, one of these lesser wits shall more deviate from nature—show more of that inconsequence, which has a natural alliance with frenzy,—than a great genius in his "maddest fits," as Wither somewhere calls them. We appeal to any one that is acquainted with the common run of Lane's novels,—as they existed some twenty or thirty years back,—those scanty intellectual viands of the whole female reading public, till a happier genius arose, and expelled for ever the innutritious phantoms,—whether he has not found his brain more "betossed," his memory more puzzled, his sense of when and where more confounded, among the improbable events, the incoherent incidents, the inconsistent characters, or no characters, of some third-rate love-intrigue—where the persons shall be a Lord Glendamour and a Miss Rivers, and the scene only alternate between Bath and Bond Street—a more bewildering dreaminess induced upon him than he has felt wandering

over all the fairy-grounds of Spenser. In the productions we refer to, nothing but names and places is familiar; the persons are neither of this world nor of any other conceivable one; an endless stream of activities without purpose, of purposes destitute of motive:—we meet phantoms in our known walks; *fantasques* only christened. In the poet we have names which announce fiction; and we have absolutely no place at all, for the things and persons of the Fairy Queen prate not of their "whereabout." But in their inner nature, and the law of their speech and actions, we are at home, and upon acquainted ground. The one turns life into a dream; the other to the wildest dreams gives the sobrieties of every-day occurrences. By what subtle art of tracing the mental processes it is effected, we are not philosophers enough to explain, but in that wonderful episode of the cave of Mammon, in which the Money God appears first in the lowest form of a miser, is then a worker of metals, and becomes the god of all the treasures of the world; and has a daughter, Ambition, before whom all the world kneels for favours—with the Hesperian fruit, the waters of Tantalus, with Pilate washing his hands vainly, but not impertinently, in the same stream—that we should be at one moment in the cave of an old hoarder of treasures, at the next at the forge of the Cyclops, in a palace and yet in hell, all at once, with the shifting mutations of the most rambling dream, and our judgment yet all the time awake, and neither

able nor willing to detect the fallacy,—is a proof of that hidden sanity which still guides the poet in the wildest seeming-aberrations.

It is not enough to say that the whole episode is a copy of the mind's conceptions in sleep; it is, in some sort—but what a copy! Let the most romantic of us, that has been entertained all night with the spectacle of some wild and magnificent vision, recombine it in the morning, and try it by his waking judgment. That which appeared so shifting, and yet so coherent, while that faculty was passive, when it comes under cool examination shall appear so reasonless and so unlinked, that we are ashamed to have been so deluded; and to have taken, though but in sleep, a monster for a god. But the transitions in this episode are every whit as violent as in the most extravagant dream, and yet the waking judgment ratifies them.

CAPTAIN JACKSON

AMONG the deaths in our obituary for this month, I observe with concern "At his cottage on the Bath Road, Captain Jackson." The name and attribution are common enough; but a feeling like reproach persuades me that this could have been no other in fact than my dear old friend, who some five-and-twenty years ago rented a tenement, which he was pleased to dignify with the appellation here used, about a mile from Westbourn Green. Alack, how good men, and the good turns they do us, slide out of memory, and are recalled but by the surprise of some such sad memento as that which now lies before us!

He whom I mean was a retired half-pay officer, with a wife and two grown-up daughters, whom he maintained with the port and notions of gentlewomen upon that slender professional allowance. Comely girls they were, too.

And was I in danger of forgetting this man?—his cheerful suppers—the noble tone of hospitality, when first you set your foot in *the cottage*—the anxious ministerings about you, where little or nothing (God knows) was to be ministered.—Althea's horn in a poor platter—the power of self-enchantment, by which, in his magnificent wishes to entertain you, he multiplied his means to bounties.

You saw with your bodily eyes indeed what

seemed a bare scrag—cold savings from the foregone meal—remnant hardly sufficient to send a mendicant from the door contented. But in the copious will—the revelling imagination of your host—the "mind, the mind, Master Shallow," whole beeves were spread before you—hecatombs—no end appeared to the profusion.

It was the widow's cruse—the loaves and fishes; carving could not lessen, nor helping diminish it—the stamina were left—the elemental bones still flourished, divested of its accidents.

"Let us live while we can," methinks I hear the open-handed creature exclaim; "while we have, let us not want," "here is plenty left"; "want for nothing"—with many more such hospitable sayings, the spurs of appetite, and old concomitants of smoking boards and feast-oppressed chargers. Then sliding a slender ratio of Single Gloucester upon his wife's plate, or the daughters', he would convey the remanent rind into his own, with a merry quirk of "the nearer the bone," etc., and declaring that he universally preferred the outside. For we had our table distinctions, you are to know, and some of us in a manner sate above the salt. None but his guest or guests dreamed of tasting flesh luxuries at night, the fragments were *verè hospitibus sacra*. But of one thing or another there was always enough, and leavings: only he would sometimes finish the remainder crust, to show that he wished no savings.

Wine we had none; nor, except on very rare

occasions, spirits; but the sensation of wine was there. Some thin kind of ale I remember—"British beverage," he would say! "Push about, my boys"; "Drink to your sweethearts, girls." At every meagre draught a toast must ensue, or a song. All the forms of good liquor were there, with none of the effects wanting. Shut your eyes, and you would swear a capacious bowl of punch was foaming in the centre, with beams of generous Port or Madeira radiating to it from each of the table corners. You got flustered, without knowing whence; tipsy upon words; and reeled under the potency of his unperforming Bacchanalian encouragements.

We had our songs—"Why, Soldiers, why,"—and the "British Grenadiers"—in which last we were all obliged to bear chorus. Both the daughters sang. Their proficiency was a nightly theme—the masters he had given them—the "no-expense" which he spared to accomplish them in a science "so necessary to young women." But then—they could not sing "without the instrument."

Sacred, and, by me, never-to-be-violated, secrets of Poverty! Should I disclose your honest aims at grandeur, your makeshift efforts of magnificence? Sleep, sleep, with all thy broken keys, if one of the bunch be extant; thrummed by a thousand ancestral thumbs; dear, cracked spinnet of dearer Louisa! Without mention of mine, be dumb, thou thin accompanier of her thinner warble! A veil be spread over the dear delighted face of the well-

deluded father, who now haply listening to cherubic notes, scarce feels sincerer pleasure than when she awakened thy time-shaken chords responsive to the twitterings of that slender image of a voice.

We were not without our literary talk either. It did not extend far, but as far as it went it was good. It was bottomed well; had good grounds to go upon. In *the cottage* was a room, which tradition authenticated to have been the same in which Glover, in his occasional retirements, had penned the greater part of his Leonidas. This circumstance was nightly quoted, though none of the present inmates, that I could discover, appeared ever to have met with the poem in question. But that was no matter. Glover had written there, and the anecdote was pressed into the account of the family importance. It diffused a learned air through the apartment, the little side casement of which (the poet's study window), opening upon a superb view as far as the pretty spire of Harrow, over domains and patrimonial acres, not a rood nor square yard whereof our host could call his own, yet gave occasion to an immoderate expansion of—vanity shall I call it?—in his bosom, as he showed them in a glowing summer evening. It was all his, he took it all in, and communicated rich portions of it to his guests. It was a part of his largess, his hospitality; it was going over his grounds; he was lord for the time of showing them, and you the implicit lookers-up to his magnificence.

He was a juggler, who threw mists before your

eyes—you had no time to detect his fallacies. He would say, "Hand me the *silver* sugar-tongs"; and before you could discover it was a single spoon, and that *plated*, he would disturb and captivate your imagination by a misnomer of "the urn" for a tea-kettle; or by calling a homely bench a sofa. Rich men direct you to their furniture, poor ones divert you from it; he neither did one nor the other, but by simply assuming that everything was handsome about him, you were positively at a demur what you did, or did not see, at *the cottage*. With nothing to live on, he seemed to live on everything. He had a stock of wealth in his mind; not that which is properly termed *Content*, for in truth he was not to be *contained* at all, but overflowed all bounds by the force of a magnificent self-delusion.

Enthusiasm is catching; and even his wife, a sober native of North Britain, who generally saw things more as they were, was not proof against the continual collision of his credulity. Her daughters were rational and discreet young women; in the main, perhaps, not insensible to their true circumstances. I have seen them assume a thoughtful air at times. But such was the preponderating opulence of his fancy, that I am persuaded not for any half hour together did they ever look their own prospects fairly in the face. There was no resisting the vortex of his temperament. His riotous imagination conjured up handsome settlements before their eyes, which kept them up in the eye of the world too,

and seem at last to have realized themselves; for they both have married since, I am told, more than respectably.

It is long since, and my memory waxes dim on some subjects, or I should wish to convey some notion of the manner in which the pleasant creature described the circumstances of his own wedding-day. I faintly remember something of a chaise-and-four, in which he made his entry into Glasgow on that morning to fetch the bride home, or carry her thither, I forget which. It so completely made out the stanza of the old ballad—

> When we came down through Glasgow town,
> We were a comely sight to see;
> My love was clad in black velvet,
> And I myself in cramasie.

I suppose it was the only occasion upon which his own actual splendour at all corresponded with the world's notions on that subject. In homely cart, or travelling caravan, by whatever humble vehicle they chanced to be transported in less prosperous days, the ride through Glasgow came back upon his fancy, not as a humiliating contrast, but as a fair occasion for reverting to that one day's state. It seemed an "equipage etern" from which no power of fate or fortune, once mounted, had power thereafter to dislodge him.

There is some merit in putting a handsome face upon indigent circumstances. To bully and swagger away the sense of them before strangers, may not

be always discommendable. Tibbs, and Bobadil, even when detected, have more of our admiration than contempt. But for a man to put the cheat upon himself; to play the Bobadil at home; and, steeped in poverty up to the lips, to fancy himself all the while chin-deep in riches, is a strain of constitutional philosophy, and a mastery over fortune, which was reserved for my old friend Captain Jackson.

THE SUPERANNUATED MAN

Sera tamen respexit
Libertas. VIRGIL.

A Clerk I was in London gay.—O'KEEFE.

IF peradventure, Reader, it has been thy lot to waste the golden years of thy life—thy shining youth—in the irksome confinement of an office; to have thy prison days prolonged through middle age down to decrepitude and silver hairs, without hope of release or respite; to have lived to forget that there are such things as holidays, or to remember them but as the prerogatives of childhood; then, and then only, will you be able to appreciate my deliverance.

It is now six-and-thirty years since I took my seat at the desk in Mincing Lane. Melancholy was the transition at fourteen from the abundant play-time, and the frequently-intervening vacations of school days, to the eight, nine, and sometimes ten hours' a-day attendance at the counting-house. But time partially reconciles us to anything. I gradually became content—doggedly contented, as wild animals in cages.

It is true I had my Sundays to myself; but Sundays, admirable as the institution of them is for purposes of worship, are for that very reason the very worst adapted for days of unbending and recre-

ation. In particular, there is a gloom for me attendant upon a city Sunday, a weight in the air. I miss the cheerful cries of London, the music, and the ballad-singers—the buzz and stirring murmur of the streets. Those eternal bells depress me. The closed shops repel me. Prints, pictures, all the glittering and endless succession of knacks and gewgaws, and ostentatiously displayed wares of tradesmen, which make a weekday saunter through the less busy parts of the metropolis so delightful—are shut out. No bookstalls deliciously to idle over—no busy faces to recreate the idle man who contemplates them ever passing by—the very face of business a charm by contrast to his temporary relaxation from it. Nothing to be seen but unhappy countenances—or half-happy at best—of emancipated 'prentices and little tradesfolks, with here and there a servant-maid that has got leave to go out, who, slaving all the week, with the habit has lost almost the capacity of enjoying a free hour; and livelily expressing the hollowness of a day's pleasuring. The very strollers in the fields on that day look anything but comfortable.

But besides Sundays, I had a day at Easter, and a day at Christmas, with a full week in the summer to go and air myself in my native fields of Hertfordshire. This last was a great indulgence; and the prospect of its recurrence, I believe, alone kept me up through the year, and made my durance tolerable. But when the week came round, did the glittering phantom of the distance keep touch with me? or

rather was it not a series of seven uneasy days, spent in restless pursuit of pleasure, and a wearisome anxiety to find out how to make the most of them? Where was the quiet, where the promised rest? Before I had a taste of it, it was vanished. I was at the desk again, counting upon the fifty-one tedious weeks that must intervene before such another snatch would come. Still the prospect of its coming threw something of an illumination upon the darker side of my captivity. Without it, as I have said, I could scarcely have sustained my thraldom.

Independently of the rigours of attendance, I have ever been haunted with a sense (perhaps a mere caprice) of incapacity for business. This, during my latter years, had increased to such a degree, that it was visible in all the lines of my countenance. My health and my good spirits flagged. I had perpetually a dread of some crisis, to which I should be found unequal. Besides my daylight servitude, I served over again all night in my sleep, and would awake with terrors of imaginary false entries, errors in my accounts, and the like. I was fifty years of age, and no prospect of emancipation presented itself. I had grown to my desk, as it were; and the wood had entered into my soul.

My fellows in the office would sometimes rally me upon the trouble legible in my countenance; but I did not know that it had raised the suspicions of any of my employers, when, on the fifth of last month, a day ever to be remembered by me, L——,

the junior partner in the firm, calling me on one side, directly taxed me with my bad looks, and frankly inquired the cause of them. So taxed, I honestly made confession of my infirmity, and added that I was afraid I should eventually be obliged to resign his service. He spoke some words of course to hearten me, and there the matter rested. A whole week I remained labouring under the impression that I had acted imprudently in my disclosure; that I had foolishly given a handle against myself, and had been anticipating my own dismissal. A week passed in this manner—the most anxious one, I verily believe, in my whole life—when on the evening of the 12th of April, just as I was about quitting my desk to go home (it might be about eight o'clock), I received an awful summons to attend the presence of the whole assembled firm in the formidable back parlour. I thought, now my time is surely come, I have done for myself, I am going to be told that they have no longer occasion for me. L——, I could see, smiled at the terror I was in, which was a little relief to me,—when to my utter astonishment B——, the eldest partner, began a formal harangue to me on the length of my services, my very meritorious conduct during the whole of the time (the deuce, thought I, how did he find out that? I protest I never had the confidence to think as much). He went on to descant on the expediency of retiring at a certain time of life, (how my heart panted!) and asking me a few questions as to the

amount of my own property, of which I have a little, ended with a proposal, to which his three partners nodded a grave assent, that I should accept from the house, which I had served so well, a pension for life to the amount of two-thirds of my accustomed salary—a magnificent offer! I do not know what I answered between surprise and gratitude, but it was understood that I accepted their proposal, and I was told that I was free from that hour to leave their service. I stammered out a bow, and at just ten minutes after eight I went home—for ever. This noble benefit—gratitude forbids me to conceal their names—I owe to the kindness of the most munificent firm in the world—the house of Boldero, Merryweather, Bosanquet, and Lacy.

Esto perpetua!

For the first day or two I felt stunned—overwhelmed. I could only apprehend my felicity; I was too confused to taste it sincerely. I wandered about, thinking I was happy, and knowing that I was not. I was in the condition of a prisoner in the old Bastile, suddenly let loose after a forty years' confinement. I could scarce trust myself with myself. It was like passing out of Time into Eternity—for it is a sort of Eternity for a man to have all his Time to himself. It seemed to me that I had more time on my hands than I could ever manage. From a poor man, poor in Time, I was suddenly lifted up into a vast revenue; I could see no end of

my possessions; I wanted some steward, or judicious bailiff, to manage my estates in Time for me. And here let me caution persons grown old in active business, not lightly nor without weighing their own resources, to forego their customary employment all at once, for there may be danger in it. I feel it by myself, but I know that my resources are sufficient; and now that those first giddy raptures have subsided, I have a quiet home-feeling of the blessedness of my condition. I am in no hurry. Having all holidays, I am as though I had none. If Time hung heavy upon me, I could walk it away; but I do *not* walk all day long, as I used to do in those old transient holidays, thirty miles a day, to make the most of them. If Time were troublesome, I could read it away; but I do *not* read in that violent measure, with which, having no Time my own but candlelight Time, I used to weary out my head and eyesight in bygone winters. I walk, read, or scribble (as now) just when the fit seizes me. I no longer hunt after pleasure; I let it come to me. I am like the man

> —that 's born and has his years come to him,
> In some green desert.

"Years!" you will say; "what is this superannuated simpleton calculating upon? He has already told us he is past fifty."

I have indeed lived nominally fifty years, but deduct out of them the hours which I have lived

to other people, and not to myself, and you will find me still a young fellow. For *that* is the only true Time, which a man can properly call his own —that which he has all to himself; the rest, though in some sense he may be said to live it, is other people's Time, not his. The remnant of my poor days, long or short, is at least multiplied for me threefold. My ten next years, if I stretch so far, will be as long as any preceding thirty. 'Tis a fair rule-of-three sum.

Among the strange fantasies which beset me at the commencement of my freedom, and of which all traces are not yet gone, one was, that a vast tract of time had intervened since I quitted the Counting House. I could not conceive of it as an affair of yesterday. The partners, and the clerks with whom I had for so many years, and for so many hours in each day of the year, been closely associated—being suddenly removed from them—they seemed as dead to me. There is a fine passage, which may serve to illustrate this fancy, in a Tragedy by Sir Robert Howard, speaking of a friend's death:—

> —'T was but just now he went away;
> I have not since had time to shed a tear;
> And yet the distance does the same appear
> As if he had been a thousand years from me.
> Time takes no measure in Eternity.

To dissipate this awkward feeling, I have been fain to go among them once or twice since; to visit

my old desk-fellows—my co-brethren of the quill —that I had left below in the state militant. Not all the kindness with which they received me could quite restore to me that pleasant familiarity, which I had heretofore enjoyed among them. We cracked some of our old jokes, but methought they went off but faintly. My old desk; the peg where I hung my hat, were appropriated to another. I knew it must be, but I could not take it kindly. D——l take me, if I did not feel some remorse—beast, if I had not —at quitting my old compeers, the faithful partners of my toils for six-and-thirty years, that soothed for me with their jokes and conundrums the ruggedness of my professional road. Had it been so rugged then, after all? or was I a coward simply? Well, it is too late to repent; and I also know that these suggestions are a common fallacy of the mind on such occasions. But my heart smote me. I had violently broken the bands betwixt us. It was at least not courteous. I shall be some time before I get quite reconciled to the separation. Farewell, old cronies, yet not for long, for again and again I will come among ye, if I shall have your leave. Farewell, Ch——, dry, sarcastic, and friendly! Do——, mild, slow to move, and gentlemanly! Pl——, officious to do, and to volunteer, good services!—and thou, thou dreary pile, fit mansion for a Gresham or a Whittington of old, stately house of Merchants; with thy labyrinthine passages, and light-excluding, pent-up offices, where candles for one-half the year supplied the

place of the sun's light; unhealthy contributor to my weal, stern fosterer of my living, farewell! In thee remain, and not in the obscure collection of some wandering bookseller, my "works!" There let them rest, as I do from my labours, piled on thy massy shelves, more MSS. in folio than ever Aquinas left, and full as useful! My mantle I bequeath among ye.

A fortnight has passed since the date of my first communication. At that period I was approaching to tranquillity, but had not reached it. I boasted of a calm indeed, but it was comparative only. Something of the first flutter was left; an unsettling sense of novelty; the dazzle to weak eyes of unaccustomed light. I missed my old chains, forsooth, as if they had been some necessary part of my apparel. I was a poor Carthusian, from strict cellular discipline suddenly by some revolution returned upon the world. I am now as if I had never been other than my own master. It is natural for me to go where I please, to do what I please. I find myself at 11 o'clock in the day in Bond Street, and it seems to me that I have been sauntering there at that very hour for years past. I digress into Soho, to explore a bookstall. Methinks I have been thirty years a collector. There is nothing strange nor new in it. I find myself before a fine picture in the morning. Was it ever otherwise? What is become of Fish Street Hill? Where is Fenchurch Street? Stones of old Mincing Lane, which I have worn with my daily pilgrimage for six-and-

thirty years, to the footsteps of what toil-worn clerk are your everlasting flints now vocal? I indent the gayer flags of Pall Mall. It is 'Change time, and I am strangely among the Elgin marbles. It was no hyperbole when I ventured to compare the change in my condition to passing into another world. Time stands still in a manner to me. I have lost all distinction of season. I do not know the day of the week or of the month. Each day used to be individually felt by me in its reference to the foreign post days; in its distance from, or propinquity to, the next Sunday. I had my Wednesday feelings, my Saturday nights' sensations. The genius of each day was upon me distinctly during the whole of it, affecting my appetite, spirits, etc. The phantom of the next day, with the dreary five to follow, sate as a load upon my poor Sabbath recreations. What charm has washed that Ethiop white? What is gone of Black Monday? All days are the same. Sunday itself—that unfortunate failure of a holiday, as it too often proved, what with my sense of its fugitiveness, and over-care to get the greatest quantity of pleasure out of it—is melted down into a week-day. I can spare to go to church now, without grudging the huge cantle which it used to seem to cut out of the holiday. I have time for everything. I can visit a sick friend. I can interrupt the man of much occupation when he is busiest. I can insult over him with an invitation to take a day's pleasure with me to Windsor this fine May-morning.

It is Lucretian pleasure to behold the poor drudges, whom I have left behind in the world, carking and caring; like horses in a mill, drudging on in the same eternal round—and what is it all for? A man can never have too much Time to himself, nor too little to do. Had I a little son, I would christen him NOTHING-TO-DO; he should do nothing. Man, I verily believe, is out of his element as long as he is operative. I am altogether for the life contemplative. Will no kindly earthquake come and swallow up those accursed cotton-mills? Take me that lumber of a desk there, and bowl it down

As low as to the fiends.

I am no longer * * * * * *, clerk to the Firm of, etc. I am Retired Leisure. I am to be met with in trim gardens. I am already come to be known by my vacant face and careless gesture, perambulating at no fixed pace, nor with any settled purpose. I walk about; not to and from. They tell me, a certain *cum dignitate* air, that has been buried so long with my other good parts, has begun to shoot forth in my person. I grow into gentility perceptibly. When I take up a newspaper, it is to read the state of the opera. *Opus operatum est.* I have done all that I came into this world to do. I have worked task-work, and have the rest of the day to myself.

THE GENTEEL STYLE IN WRITING

IT is an ordinary criticism, that my Lord Shaftesbury and Sir William Temple are models of the genteel style in writing. We should prefer saying—of the lordly, and the gentlemanly. Nothing can be more unlike, than the inflated finical rhapsodies of Shaftesbury and the plain natural chit-chat of Temple. The man of rank is discernible in both writers; but in the one it is only insinuated gracefully, in the other it stands out offensively. The peer seems to have written with his coronet on, and his Earl's mantle before him; the commoner in his elbow-chair and undress.—What can be more pleasant than the way in which the retired statesman peeps out in his essays, penned by the latter in his delightful retreat at Shene? They scent of Nimeguen and the Hague. Scarce an authority is quoted under an ambassador. Don Francisco de Melo, a "Portugal Envoy in England," tells him it was frequent in his country for men, spent with age and other decays, so as they could not hope for above a year or two of life, to ship themselves away in a Brazil fleet, and after their arrival there to go on a great length, sometimes of twenty or thirty years, or more, by the force of that vigour they recovered with that remove. "Whether such an effect (Temple beautifully adds) might grow from the air, or the fruits of that climate, or by approaching nearer the sun,

which is the fountain of light and heat, when their natural heat was so far decayed; or whether the piecing out of an old man's life were worth the pains; I cannot tell: perhaps the play is not worth the candle." Monsieur Pompone, "French Ambassador in his (Sir William's) time at the Hague," certifies him, that in his life he had never heard of any man in France that arrived at a hundred years of age; a limitation of life which the old gentleman imputes to the excellence of their climate, giving them such a liveliness of temper and humour, as disposes them to more pleasures of all kinds than in other countries; and moralizes upon the matter very sensibly. The "late Robert Earl of Leicester" furnishes him with a story of a Countess of Desmond, married out of England in Edward the Fourth's time, and who lived far in King James's reign. The "same noble person" gives him an account, how such a year, in the same reign, there went about the country a set of morrice-dancers, composed of ten men who danced, a Maid Marian, and a tabor and pipe; and how these twelve, one with another, made up twelve hundred years. "It was not so much (says Temple) that so many in one small county (Hertfordshire) should live to that age, as that they should be in vigour and in humour to travel and to dance." Monsieur Zulichem, one of his "colleagues at the Hague," informs him of a cure for the gout; which is confirmed by another "Envoy," Monsieur Serinchamps, in that town, who had tried it. — Old Prince Maurice

of Nassau recommends to him the use of hammocks in that complaint; having been allured to sleep, while suffering under it himself, by the "constant motion or swinging of those airy beds." Count Egmont, and the Rhinegrave who "was killed last summer before Maestricht," impart to him their experiences.

But the rank of the writer is never more innocently disclosed, than where he takes for granted the compliments paid by foreigners to his fruit-trees. For the taste and perfection of what we esteem the best, he can truly say, that the French, who have eaten his peaches and grapes at Shene in no very ill year, have generally concluded that the last are as good as any they have eaten in France on this side Fontainebleau; and the first as good as any they have eat in Gascony. Italians have agreed his white figs to be as good as any of that sort in Italy, which is the earlier kind of white fig there; for in the latter kind and the blue, we cannot come near the warm climates, no more than in the Frontignac or Muscat grape. His orange-trees, too, are as large as any he saw when he was young in France, except those of Fontainebleau; or what he had seen since in the Low Countries, except some very old ones of the Prince of Orange's. Of grapes he had the honour of bringing over four sorts into England, which he enumerates, and supposes that they are all by this time pretty common among some gardeners in his neighbourhood, as well as several

persons of quality; for he ever thought all things of this kind "the commoner they are made the better." The garden pedantry with which he asserts that 't is to little purpose to plant any of the best fruits, as peaches or grapes, hardly, he doubts, beyond Northamptonshire at the farthest northwards; and praises the "Bishop of Munster at Cosevelt," for attempting nothing beyond cherries in that cold climate; is equally pleasant and in character. "I may perhaps" (he thus ends his sweet Garden Essay with a passage worthy of Cowley) "be allowed to know something of this trade, since I have so long allowed myself to be good for nothing else, which few men will do, or enjoy their gardens, without often looking abroad to see how other matters play, what motions in the state, and what invitations they may hope for into other scenes. For my own part, as the country life, and this part of it more particularly, were the inclination of my youth itself, so they are the pleasures of my age; and I can truly say that, among many great employments that have fallen to my share, I have never asked or sought for any of them, but have often endeavoured to escape from them, into the ease and freedom of a private scene, where a man may go his own way and his own pace in the common paths and circles of life. The measure of choosing well is whether a man likes what he has chosen, which, I thank God, has befallen me; and though among the follies of my life, building and planting have not been the least, and have cost me

more than I have the confidence to own; yet they have been fully recompensed by the sweetness and satisfaction of this retreat, where, since my resolution taken of never entering again into any public employments, I have passed five years without ever once going to town, though I am almost in sight of it, and have a house there always ready to receive me. Nor has this been any sort of affectation, as some have thought it, but a mere want of desire or humour to make so small a remove; for when I am in this corner I can truly say with Horace, *Me quoties reficit*, etc.

> 'Me, when the cold Digentian stream revives,
> What does my friend believe I think or ask?
> Let me yet less possess, so I may live,
> Whate'er of life remains, unto myself.
> May I have books enough; and one year's store,
> Not to depend upon each doubtful hour:
> This is enough of mighty Jove to pray,
> Who, as he pleases, gives and takes away.'"

The writings of Temple are, in general, after this easy copy. On one occasion, indeed, his wit, which was mostly subordinate to nature and tenderness, has seduced him into a string of felicitous antitheses; which, it is obvious to remark, have been a model to Addison and succeeding essayists. "Who would not be covetous, and with reason," he says, "if health could be purchased with gold? who not ambitious, if it were at the command of power, or restored by honour? but, alas! a white staff will not

help gouty feet to walk better than a common cane; nor a blue ribband bind up a wound so well as a fillet. The glitter of gold, or of diamonds, will but hurt sore eyes instead of curing them; and an aching head will be no more eased by wearing a crown than a common nightcap." In a far better style, and more accordant with his own humour of plainness, are the concluding sentences of his "Discourse upon Poetry." Temple took a part in the controversy about the ancient and the modern learning; and, with that partiality so natural and so graceful in an old man, whose state engagements had left him little leisure to look into modern productions, while his retirement gave him occasion to look back upon the classic studies of his youth—decided in favour of the latter. "Certain it is," he says, "that, whether the fierceness of the Gothic humours, or noise of their perpetual wars, frighted it away, or that the unequal mixture of the modern languages would not bear it—the great heights and excellency both of poetry and music fell with the Roman learning and empire, and have never since recovered the admiration and applauses that before attended them. Yet, such as they are amongst us, they must be confessed to be the softest and the sweetest, the most general and most innocent amusements of common time and life. They still find room in the courts of princes, and the cottages of shepherds. They serve to revive and animate the dead calm of poor and idle lives, and to allay or divert the violent passions

and perturbations of the greatest and the busiest men. And both these effects are of equal use to human life; for the mind of man is like the sea, which is neither agreeable to the beholder nor the voyager, in a calm or in a storm, but is so to both when a little agitated by gentle gales; and so the mind, when moved by soft and easy passions or affections. I know very well that many who pretend to be wise by the forms of being grave, are apt to despise both poetry and music, as toys and trifles too light for the use or entertainment of serious men. But whoever find themselves wholly insensible to their charms, would, I think, do well to keep their own counsel, for fear of reproaching their own temper, and bringing the goodness of their natures, if not of their understandings, into question. While this world lasts, I doubt not but the pleasure and request of these two entertainments will do so too; and happy those that content themselves with these, or any other so easy and so innocent, and do not trouble the world or other men, because they cannot be quiet themselves, though nobody hurts them." "When all is done (he concludes), human life is at the greatest and the best but like a froward child, that must be played with, and humoured a little, to keep it quiet, till it falls asleep, and then the care is over."

BARBARA S——

ON the noon of the 14th of November, 1743 or 4, I forget which it was, just as the clock had struck one, Barbara S——, with her accustomed punctuality, ascended the long rambling staircase, with awkward interposed landing-places, which led to the office, or rather a sort of box with a desk in it, whereat sat the then treasurer of (what few of our readers may remember) the old Bath Theatre. All over the island it was the custom, and remains so I believe to this day, for the players to receive their weekly stipend on the Saturday. It was not much that Barbara had to claim.

The little maid had just entered her eleventh year; but her important station at the theatre, as it seemed to her, with the benefits which she felt to accrue from her pious application of her small earnings, had given an air of womanhood to her steps and to her behaviour. You would have taken her to have been at least five years older.

Till latterly she had merely been employed in choruses, or where children were wanted to fill up the scene. But the manager, observing a diligence and adroitness in her above her age, had for some few months past intrusted to her the performance of whole parts. You may guess the self-consequence of the promoted Barbara. She had already drawn tears in young Arthur; had rallied Richard with in-

fantine petulance in the Duke of York; and in her turn had rebuked that petulance when she was Prince of Wales. She would have done the elder child in Morton's pathetic afterpiece to the life; but as yet the "Children in the Wood" was not.

Long after this little girl was grown an aged woman, I have seen some of these small parts, each making two or three pages at most, copied out in the rudest hand of the then prompter, who doubtless transcribed a little more carefully and fairly for the grown-up tragedy ladies of the establishment. But such as they were, blotted and scrawled, as for a child's use, she kept them all; and in the zenith of her after reputation it was a delightful sight to behold them bound up in costliest morocco, each single—each small part making a *book*—with fine clasps, gilt-splashed, etc. She had conscientiously kept them as they had been delivered to her; not a blot had been effaced or tampered with. They were precious to her for their affecting remembrancings. They were her principia, her rudiments; the elementary atoms; the little steps by which she pressed forward to perfection. "What," she would say, "could Indian Rubber, or a pumice-stone, have done for these darlings?"

I am in no hurry to begin my story—indeed, I have little or none to tell—so I will just mention an observation of hers connected with that interesting time.

Not long before she died I had been discoursing

with her on the quantity of real present emotion which a great tragic performer experiences during acting. I ventured to think, that though in the first instance such players must have possessed the feelings which they so powerfully called up in others, yet by frequent repetition those feelings must become deadened in great measure, and the performer trust to the memory of past emotion, rather than express a present one. She indignantly repelled the notion, that with a truly great tragedian the operation, by which such effects were produced upon an audience, could ever degrade itself into what was purely mechanical. With much delicacy, avoiding to instance in her *self*-experience, she told me, that so long ago as when she used to play the part of the Little Son to Mrs. Porter's Isabella (I think it was), when that impressive actress has been bending over her in some heartrending colloquy, she has felt real hot tears come trickling from her, which (to use her powerful expression) have perfectly scalded her back.

I am not quite so sure that it was Mrs. Porter; but it was some great actress of that day. The name is indifferent; but the fact of the scalding tears I most distinctly remember.

I was always fond of the society of players, and am not sure that an impediment in my speech (which certainly kept me out of the pulpit), even more than certain personal disqualifications, which are often got over in that profession, did not prevent me at one time of life from adopting it. I have

had the honour (I must ever call it) once to have been admitted to the tea-table of Miss Kelly. I have played at serious whist with Mr. Liston. I have chatted with ever good-humoured Mrs. Charles Kemble. I have conversed as friend to friend with her accomplished husband. I have been indulged with a classical conference with Macready; and with a sight of the Player-picture gallery, at Mr. Mathews's, when the kind owner, to remunerate me for my love of the old actors (whom he loves so much), went over it with me, supplying to his capital collection, what alone the artist could not give them —voice; and their living motion. Old tones, half-faded, of Dodd, and Parsons, and Baddeley, have lived again for me at his bidding. Only Edwin he could not restore to me. I have supped with ——; but I am growing a coxcomb.

As I was about to say—at the desk of the then treasurer of the old Bath Theatre—not Diamond's —presented herself the little Barbara S——.

The parents of Barbara had been in reputable circumstances. The father had practised, I believe, as an apothecary in the town. But his practice, from causes which I feel my own infirmity too sensibly that way to arraign—or perhaps from that pure infelicity which accompanies some people in their walk through life, and which it is impossible to lay at the door of imprudence—was now reduced to nothing. They were, in fact, in the very teeth of starvation, when the manager, who knew and re-

spected them in better days, took the little Barbara into his company.

At the period I commenced with, her slender earnings were the sole support of the family, including two younger sisters. I must throw a veil over some mortifying circumstances. Enough to say, that her Saturday's pittance was the only chance of a Sunday's (generally their only) meal of meat.

One thing I will only mention, that in some child's part, where in her theatrical character she was to sup off a roast fowl (O joy to Barbara!) some comic actor, who was for the night caterer for this dainty—in the misguided humour of his part, threw over the dish such a quantity of salt (O grief and pain of heart to Barbara!) that when he crammed a portion of it into her mouth, she was obliged sputteringly to reject it; and what with shame of her ill-acted part, and pain of real appetite at missing such a dainty, her little heart sobbed almost to breaking, till a flood of tears, which the well-fed spectators were totally unable to comprehend, mercifully relieved her.

This was the little starved, meritorious maid, who stood before old Ravenscroft, the treasurer, for her Saturday's payment.

Ravenscroft was a man, I have heard many old theatrical people besides herself say, of all men least calculated for a treasurer. He had no head for accounts, paid away at random, kept scarce any books,

and summing up at the week's end, if he found himself a pound or so deficient, blest himself that it was no worse.

Now Barbara's weekly stipend was a bare half-guinea.—By mistake he popped into her hand—a whole one.

Barbara tripped away.

She was entirely unconscious at first of the mistake. God knows, Ravenscroft would never have discovered it.

But when she had got down to the first of those uncouth landing-places, she became sensible of an unusual weight of metal pressing in her little hand.

Now mark the dilemma.

She was by nature a good child. From her parents and those about her, she had imbibed no contrary influence. But then they had taught her nothing. Poor men's smoky cabins are not always porticoes of moral philosophy. This little maid had no instinct to evil, but then she might be said to have no fixed principle. She had heard honesty commended, but never dreamed of its application to herself. She thought of it as something which concerned grown-up people, men and women. She had never known temptation, or thought of preparing resistance against it.

Her first impulse was to go back to the old treasurer, and explain to him his blunder. He was already so confused with age, besides a natural want of punctuality, that she would have had some diffi-

culty in making him understand it. She saw *that* in an instant. And then it was such a bit of money! and then the image of a larger allowance of butcher's meat on their table the next day came across her, till her little eyes glistened, and her mouth moistened. But then Mr. Ravenscroft had always been so good-natured, had stood her friend behind the scenes, and even recommended her promotion to some of her little parts. But again the old man was reputed to be worth a world of money. He was supposed to have fifty pounds a-year clear of the theatre. And then came staring upon her the figures of her little stockingless and shoeless sisters. And when she looked at her own neat white cotton stockings, which her situation at the theatre had made it indispensable for her mother to provide for her, with hard straining and pinching from the family stock, and thought how glad she should be to cover their poor feet with the same—and how then they could accompany her to rehearsals, which they had hitherto been precluded from doing, by reason of their unfashionable attire,—in these thoughts she reached the second landing-place—the second, I mean, from the top—for there was still another left to traverse.

Now virtue support Barbara!

And that never-failing friend *did* step in—for at that moment a strength not her own, I have heard her say, was revealed to her—a reason above reasoning—and without her own agency, as it seemed (for

she never felt her feet to move), she found herself transported back to the individual desk she had just quitted, and her hand in the old hand of Ravenscroft, who in silence took back the refunded treasure, and who had been sitting (good man) insensible to the lapse of minutes, which to her were anxious ages, and from that moment a deep peace fell upon her heart, and she knew the quality of honesty.

A year or two's unrepining application to her profession brightened up the feet and the prospects of her little sisters, set the whole family upon their legs again, and released her from the difficulty of discussing moral dogmas upon a landing-place.

I have heard her say that it was a surprise, not much short of mortification to her, to see the coolness with which the old man pocketed the difference, which had caused her such mortal throes.

This anecdote of herself I had in the year 1800, from the mouth of the late Mrs. Crawford,[1] then sixty-seven years of age (she died soon after); and to her struggles upon this childish occasion I have sometimes ventured to think her indebted for that power of rending the heart in the representation of conflicting emotions, for which in after years she was considered as little inferior (if at all so in the part of Lady Randolph) even to Mrs. Siddons.

[1] The maiden name of this lady was Street, which she changed, by successive marriages, for those of Dancer, Barry, and Crawford. She was Mrs. Crawford, a third time a widow, when I knew her.

THE TOMBS IN THE ABBEY

IN A LETTER TO R—— S——, ESQ.

THOUGH in some points of doctrine, and perhaps of discipline, I am diffident of lending a perfect assent to that church which you have so worthily *historified*, yet may the ill time never come to me, when with a chilled heart or a portion of irreverent sentiment, I shall enter her beautiful and time-hallowed Edifices. Judge, then, of my mortification when, after attending the choral anthems of last Wednesday at Westminster, and being desirous of renewing my acquaintance, after lapsed years, with the tombs and antiquities there, I found myself excluded; turned out, like a dog, or some profane person, into the common street, with feelings not very congenial to the place, or to the solemn service which I had been listening to. It was a jar after that music.

You had your education at Westminster; and doubtless among those dim aisles and cloisters, you must have gathered much of that devotional feeling in those young years, on which your purest mind feeds still—and may it feed! The antiquarian spirit, strong in you, and gracefully blending ever with the religious, may have been sown in you among those wrecks of splendid mortality. You owe it to the place of your education; you owe it to your learned fondness for the architecture of your ancestors; you

owe it to the venerableness of your ecclesiastical establishment, which is daily lessened and called in question through these practices—to speak aloud your sense of them; never to desist raising your voice against them, till they be totally done away with and abolished; till the doors of Westminster Abbey be no longer closed against the decent, though low-in-purse, enthusiast, or blameless devotee, who must commit an injury against his family economy, if he would be indulged with a bare admission within its walls. You owe it to the decencies which you wish to see maintained in its impressive services, that our cathedral be no longer an object of inspection to the poor at those times only, in which they must rob from their attendance on the worship every minute which they can bestow upon the fabric. In vain the public prints have taken up this subject,—in vain such poor, nameless writers as myself express their indignation. A word from you, Sir,—a hint in your Journal—would be sufficient to fling open the doors of the Beautiful Temple again, as we can remember them when we were boys. At that time of life, what would the imaginative faculty (such as it is) in both of us, have suffered, if the entrance to so much reflection had been obstructed by the demand of so much silver!—If we had scraped it up to gain an occasional admission (as we certainly should have done), would the sight of those old tombs have been as impressive to us (while we have been weighing anxiously prudence against sentiment) as when the

gates stood open as those of the adjacent park; when we could walk in at any time, as the mood brought us, for a shorter or longer time, as that lasted? Is the being shown over a place the same as silently for ourselves detecting the genius of it? In no part of our beloved Abbey now can a person find entrance (out of service-time) under the sum of *two shillings*. The rich and the great will smile at the anti-climax, presumed to lie in these two short words. But you can tell them, Sir, how much quiet worth, how much capacity for enlarged feeling, how much taste and genius, may coexist, especially in youth, with a purse incompetent to this demand. A respected friend of ours, during his late visit to the metropolis, presented himself for admission to St. Paul's. At the same time a decently-clothed man, with as decent a wife and child, were bargaining for the same indulgence. The price was only twopence each person. The poor but decent man hesitated, desirous to go in; but there were three of them, and he turned away reluctantly. Perhaps he wished to have seen the tomb of Nelson. Perhaps the Interior of the Cathedral was his object. But in the state of his finances, even sixpence might reasonably seem too much. Tell the Aristocracy of the country (no man can do it more impressively); instruct them of what value these insignificant pieces of money, these minims to their sight, may be to their humbler brethren. Shame these Sellers out of the Temple. Stifle not the suggestions of your better nature with the

pretext, that an indiscriminate admission would expose the Tombs to violation. Remember your boy-days. Did you ever see, or hear, of a mob in the Abbey, while it was free to all? Do the rabble come there, or trouble their heads about such speculations? It is all that you can do to drive them into your churches; they do not voluntarily offer themselves. They have, alas! no passion for antiquities; for tomb of king or prelate, sage or poet. If they had, they would be no longer the rabble.

For forty years that I have known the Fabric, the only well-attested charge of violation adduced has been—a ridiculous dismemberment committed upon the effigy of that amiable spy, Major André. And is it for this—the wanton mischief of some school-boy, fired perhaps with raw notions of Transatlantic Freedom—or the remote possibility of such a mischief occurring again, so easily to be prevented by stationing a constable within the walls, if the vergers are incompetent to the duty—is it upon such wretched pretences that the people of England are made to pay a new Peter's Pence, so long abrogated; or must content themselves with contemplating the ragged Exterior of their Cathedral? The mischief was done about the time that you were a scholar there. Do you know anything about the unfortunate relic?—

AMICUS REDIVIVUS

> Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
> Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?

I DO not know when I have experienced a stranger sensation than on seeing my old friend, G. D., who had been paying me a morning visit, a few Sundays back, at my cottage at Islington, upon taking leave, instead of turning down the right-hand path by which he had entered—with staff in hand, and at noonday, deliberately march right forwards into the midst of the stream that runs by us, and totally disappear.

A spectacle like this at dusk would have been appalling enough; but in the broad, open daylight, to witness such an unreserved motion towards self-destruction in a valued friend, took from me all power of speculation.

How I found my feet I know not. Consciousness was quite gone. Some spirit, not my own, whirled me to the spot. I remember nothing but the silvery apparition of a good white head emerging; nigh which a staff (the hand unseen that wielded it) pointed upwards, as feeling for the skies. In a moment (if time was in that time) he was on my shoulders, and I—freighted with a load more precious than his who bore Anchises.

And here I cannot but do justice to the officious

zeal of sundry passers-by, who, albeit arriving a little too late to participate in the honours of the rescue, in philanthropic shoals came thronging to communicate their advice as to the recovery; prescribing variously the application, or non-application, of salt, etc., to the person of the patient. Life, meantime, was ebbing fast away, amidst the stifle of conflicting judgments, when one, more sagacious than the rest, by a bright thought, proposed sending for the Doctor. Trite as the counsel was, and impossible, as one should think, to be missed on,—shall I confess?—in this emergency it was to me as if an Angel had spoken. Great previous exertions —and mine had not been inconsiderable—are commonly followed by a debility of purpose. This was a moment of irresolution.

Monoculus—for so, in default of catching his true name, I choose to designate the medical gentleman who now appeared—is a grave, middle-aged person, who, without having studied at the college, or truckled to the pedantry of a diploma, hath employed a great portion of his valuable time in experimental processes upon the bodies of unfortunate fellow-creatures, in whom the vital spark, to mere vulgar thinking, would seem extinct and lost for ever. He omitteth no occasion of obtruding his services, from a case of common surfeit suffocation to the ignobler obstructions, sometimes induced by a too wilful application of the plant *cannabis* outwardly. But though he declineth not altogether these drier

extinctions, his occupation tendeth, for the most part, to water-practice; for the convenience of which, he hath judiciously fixed his quarters near the grand repository of the stream mentioned, where day and night, from his little watch-tower, at the Middleton's Head, he listeneth to detect the wrecks of drowned mortality—partly, as he saith, to be upon the spot—and partly, because the liquids which he useth to prescribe to himself and his patients, on these distressing occasions, are ordinarily more conveniently to be found at these common hostelries than in the shops and phials of the apothecaries. His ear hath arrived to such finesse by practice, that it is reported he can distinguish a plunge, at half a furlong distance; and can tell if it be casual or deliberate. He weareth a medal, suspended over a suit, originally of a sad brown, but which, by time and frequency of nightly divings, has been dinged into a true professional sable. He passeth by the name of Doctor, and is remarkable for wanting his left eye. His remedy—after a sufficient application of warm blankets, friction, etc., is a simple tumbler, or more, of the purest Cognac, with water, made as hot as the convalescent can bear it. Where he findeth, as in the case of my friend, a squeamish subject, he condescendeth to be the taster; and showeth, by his own example, the innocuous nature of the prescription. Nothing can be more kind or encouraging than this procedure. It addeth confidence to the patient, to see his medical adviser go hand in hand

with himself in the remedy. When the doctor swalloweth his own draught, what peevish invalid can refuse to pledge him in the potion? In fine, Monoculus is a humane, sensible man, who, for a slender pittance, scarce enough to sustain life, is content to wear it out in the endeavour to save the lives of others—his pretensions so moderate, that with difficulty I could press a crown upon him, for the price of restoring the existence of such an invaluable creature to society as G. D.

It was pleasant to observe the effect of the subsiding alarm upon the nerves of the dear absentee. It seemed to have given a shake to memory, calling up notice after notice, of all the providential deliverances he had experienced in the course of his long and innocent life. Sitting up on my couch—my couch which, naked and void of furniture hitherto, for the salutary repose which it administered, shall be honoured with costly valance, at some price, and henceforth be a state-bed at Colebrook,—he discoursed of marvellous escapes—by carelessness of nurses—by pails of gelid, and kettles of the boiling element, in infancy—by orchard pranks, and snapping twigs, in schoolboy frolics—by descent of tiles at Trumpington, and of heavier tomes at Pembroke—by studious watchings, inducing frightful vigilance—by want, and the fear of want, and all the sore throbbings of the learned head.—Anon, he would burst out into little fragments of chanting—of songs long ago—ends of deliverance hymns, not remem-

bered before since childhood, but coming up now, when his heart was made tender as a child's—for the *tremor cordis*, in the retrospect of a recent deliverance, as in a case of impending danger, acting upon an innocent heart, will produce a self-tenderness, which we should do ill to christen cowardice; and Shakspeare, in the latter crisis, has made his good Sir Hugh to remember the sitting by Babylon, and to mutter of shallow rivers.

Waters of Sir Hugh Middleton—what a spark you were like to have extinguished for ever! Your salubrious streams to this City, for now near two centuries, would hardly have atoned for what you were in a moment washing away. Mockery of a river—liquid artifice—wretched conduit! henceforth rank with canals and sluggish aqueducts. Was it for this that, smit in boyhood with the explorations of that Abyssinian traveller, I paced the vales of Amwell to explore your tributary springs, to trace your salutary waters sparkling through green Hertfordshire, and cultured Enfield parks?—Ye have no swans—no Naïads—no river God—or did the benevolent hoary aspect of my friend tempt ye to suck him in, that ye also might have the tutelary genius of your waters?

Had he been drowned in Cam, there would have been some consonancy in it; but what willows had ye to wave and rustle over his moist sepulture?—or, having no *name*, besides that unmeaning assumption of *eternal novity*, did ye think to get one by

the noble prize, and henceforth to be termed the STREAM DYERIAN?

> And could such spacious virtue find a grave
> Beneath the imposthumed bubble of a wave?

I protest, George, you shall not venture out again —no, not by daylight—without a sufficient pair of spectacles—in your musing moods especially. Your absence of mind we have borne, till your presence of body came to be called in question by it. You shall not go wandering into Euripus with Aristotle, if we can help it. Fie, man, to turn dipper at your years, after your many tracts in favour of sprinkling only!

I have nothing but water in my head o' nights since this frightful accident. Sometimes I am with Clarence in his dream. At others, I behold Christian beginning to sink, and crying out to his good brother Hopeful (that is, to me), "I sink in deep waters; the billows go over my head, all the waves go over me. Selah." Then I have before me Palinurus, just letting go the steerage. I cry out too late to save. Next follow—a mournful procession—*suicidal faces*, saved against their wills from drowning; dolefully trailing a length of reluctant gratefulness, with ropy weeds pendent from locks of watchet hue—constrained Lazari—Pluto's half-subjects—stolen fees from the grave—bilking Charon of his fare. At their head Arion—or is it G. D.?—in his singing garments marcheth singly, with harp in hand,

and votive garland, which Machaon (or Dr. Hawes) snatcheth straight, intending to suspend it to the stern God of Sea. Then follow dismal streams of Lethe, in which the half-drenched on earth are constrained to drown downright, by wharfs where Ophelia twice acts her muddy death.

And, doubtless, there is some notice in that invisible world when one of us approacheth (as my friend did so lately) to their inexorable precincts. When a soul knocks once, twice, at Death's door, the sensation aroused within the palace must be considerable; and the grim Feature, by modern science so often dispossessed of his prey, must have learned by this time to pity Tantalus.

A pulse assuredly was felt along the line of the Elysian shades, when the near arrival of G. D. was announced by no equivocal indications. From their seats of Asphodel arose the gentler and the graver ghosts—poet, or historian—of Grecian or of Roman lore—to crown with unfading chaplets the half-finished love-labours of their unwearied scholiast. Him Markland expected—him Tyrwhitt hoped to encounter—him the sweet lyrist of Peter House, whom he had barely seen upon earth,[1] with newest airs prepared to greet ——; and patron of the gentle Christ's boy,—who should have been his patron through life—the mild Askew, with longing aspirations leaned foremost from his venerable Æsculapian chair, to welcome into that happy company

[1] Graium *tantum vidit.*

the matured virtues of the man, whose tender scions in the boy he himself upon earth had so prophetically fed and watered.

SOME SONNETS OF SIR PHILIP SYDNEY

SYDNEY'S SONNETS—I speak of the best of them—are among the very best of their sort. They fall below the plain moral dignity, the sanctity, and high yet modest spirit of self-approval, of Milton, in his compositions of a similar structure. They are in truth what Milton, censuring the Arcadia, says of that work (to which they are a sort of after-tune or application), "vain and amatorious" enough, yet the things in their kind (as he confesses to be true of the romance) may be "full of worth and wit." They savour of the Courtier, it must be allowed, and not of the Commonwealthsman. But Milton was a Courtier when he wrote the Masque at Ludlow Castle, and still more a Courtier when he composed the Arcades. When the national struggle was to begin, he becomingly cast these vanities behind him; and if the order of time had thrown Sir Philip upon the crisis which preceded the revolution, there is no reason why he should not have acted the same part in that emergency, which has glorified the name of a later Sydney. He did not want for plainness or boldness of spirit. His letter on the French match may testify he could speak his mind freely to Princes. The times did not call him to the scaffold.

The Sonnets which we oftenest call to mind of

Milton were the compositions of his maturest years. Those of Sydney, which I am about to produce, were written in the very heyday of his blood. They are stuck full of amorous fancies—far-fetched conceits, befitting his occupation; for True Love thinks no labour to send out Thoughts upon the vast and more than Indian voyages, to bring home rich pearls, outlandish wealth, gums, jewels, spicery, to sacrifice in self-depreciating similitudes, as shadows of true amiabilities in the Beloved. We must be Lovers—or at least the cooling touch of time, the *circum præcordia frigus*, must not have so damped our faculties, as to take away our recollection that we were once so—before we can duly appreciate the glorious vanities and graceful hyperboles of the passion. The images which lie before our feet (though by some accounted the only natural) are least natural for the high Sydnean love to express its fancies by. They may serve for the loves of Tibullus, or the dear Author of the Schoolmistress; for passions that creep and whine in Elegies and Pastoral Ballads. I am sure Milton never loved at this rate. I am afraid some of his addresses (*ad Leonoram* I mean) have rather erred on the farther side; and that the poet came not much short of a religious indecorum, when he could thus apostrophize a singing-girl:—

> Angelus unicuique suus (sic credite gentes)
> Obtigit ætheriis ales ab ordinibus.
> Quid mirum, Leonora, tibi si gloria major,
> Nam tua præsentem vox sonat ipsa Deum?

Aut Deus, aut vacui certè mens tertia cœli
Per tua secretò guttura serpit agens;
Serpit agens, facilisque docet mortalia corda
Sensiin immortali assuescere posse sono.
QUOD SI CUNCTA QUIDEM DEUS EST, PER CUNCTAQUE FUSUS,
IN TE UNA LOQUITUR, CÆTERA MUTUS HABET.

This is loving in a strange fashion; and it requires some candour of construction (besides the slight darkening of a dead language) to cast a veil over the ugly appearance of something very like blasphemy in the last two verses. I think the Lover would have been staggered if he had gone about to express the same thought in English. I am sure Sydney has no flights like this. His extravaganzas do not strike at the sky, though he takes leave to adopt the pale Dian into a fellowship with his mortal passions.

I

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies
How silently; and with how wan a face!
What! may it be, that even in heavenly place
That busy Archer his sharp arrow tries?
Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case;
I read it in thy looks; thy languisht grace
To me, that feel the like, thy state descries.
Then, even of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deem'd there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be loved, and yet
Those lovers scorn, whom that love doth possess?
Do they call *virtue* there—*ungratefulness!*

The last line of this poem is a little obscured by

transposition. He means, Do they call ungratefulness there a virtue?

II

Come, Sleep, O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
The indifferent judge between the high and low;
With shield of proof shield me from out the prease[1]
Of those fierce darts despair at me doth throw;
O make in me those civil wars to cease:
I will good tribute pay if thou do so.
Take thou of me sweet pillows, sweetest bed;
A chamber deaf to noise, and blind to light;
A rosy garland, and a weary head.
And if these things, as being thine by right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

III

The curious wits, seeing dull pensiveness
Bewray itself in my long-settled eyes,
Whence those same fumes of melancholy rise,
With idle pains, and missing aim, do guess.
Some, that know how my spring I did address,
Deem that my Muse some fruit of knowledge plies.
Others, because the Prince my service tries,
Think, that I think state errors to redress;
But harder judges judge, ambition's rage,
Scourge of itself, still climbing slippery place,
Holds my young brain captiv'd in golden cage.
O fools, or over-wise! alas, the race
Of all my thoughts hath neither stop nor start,
But only Stella's eyes, and Stella's heart.

[1] Press.

IV

Because I oft in dark abstracted guise
Seem most alone in greatest company,
With dearth of words, or answers quite awry,
To them that would make speech of speech arise;
They deem, and of their doom the rumour flies,
That poison foul of bubbling *Pride* doth lie
So in my swelling breast, that only I
Fawn on myself, and others do despise;
Yet *Pride*, I think, doth not my soul possess,
Which looks too oft in his unflattering glass;
But one worse fault—*Ambition*—I confess,
That makes me oft my best friends overpass,
Unseen, unheard—while Thought to highest place
Bends all his powers, even unto STELLA's grace.

V

Having this day, my horse, my hand, my lance,
Guided so well that I obtained the prize,
Both by the judgment of the English eyes,
And of some sent from that *sweet enemy*,—France;
Horsemen my skill in horsemanship advance;
Townsfolk my strength; a daintier judge applies
His praise to sleight, which from good use doth rise;
Some lucky wits impute it but to chance;
Others, because of both sides I do take
My blood from them, who did excel in this,
Think Nature me a man of arms did make.
How far they shot awry! the true cause is,
STELLA look'd on, and from her heavenly face
Sent forth the beams which made so fair my race.

VI

In martial sports I had my cunning tried,
And yet to break more staves did me address,

While with the people's shouts (I must confess)
Youth, luck, and praise, even fill'd my veins with pride—
When Cupid having me (his slave) descried
In Mars' livery, prancing in the press,
"What now, Sir Fool!" said he; "I would no less:
Look here, I say." I look'd, and STELLA spied,
Who hard by made a window send forth light.
My heart then quaked, then dazzled were mine eyes;
One hand forgot to rule, th' other to fight;
Nor trumpet's sound I heard, nor friendly cries.
My foe came on, and beat the air for me—
Till that her blush made me my shame to see.

VII

No more, my dear, no more these counsels try;
O give my passions leave to run their race;
Let Fortune lay on me her worst disgrace;
Let folk o'ercharged with brain against me cry;
Let clouds bedim my face, break in mine eye;
Let me no steps, but of lost labour, trace;
Let all the earth with scorn recount my case—
But do not will me from my love to fly.
I do not envy Aristotle's wit,
Nor do aspire to Cæsar's bleeding fame;
Nor aught do care, though some above me sit;
Nor hope, nor wish, another course to frame,
But that which once may win thy cruel heart:
Thou art my wit, and thou my virtue art.

VIII

LOVE still a boy, and oft a wanton, is,
School'd only by his mother's tender eye;
What wonder, then, if he his lesson miss,
When for so soft a rod dear play he try?
And yet my STAR, because a sugar'd kiss
In sport I suck'd, while she asleep did lie,

Doth lour, nay chide, nay threat, for only this.
Sweet, it was saucy Love, not humble I.
But no 'scuse serves; she makes her wrath appear
In Beauty's throne—see now who dares come near
Those scarlet judges, threat'ning bloody pain?
O heav'nly Fool, thy most kiss-worthy face
Anger invests with such a lovely grace,
That anger's self I needs must kiss again.

IX

I never drank of Aganippe well,
Nor ever did in shade of Tempe sit,
And Muses scorn with vulgar brains to dwell;
Poor lay-man I, for sacred rites unfit.
Some do I hear of Poet's fury tell,
But (God wot) wot not what they mean by it;
And this I swear by blackest brook of hell,
I am no pick-purse of another's wit.
How falls it then, that with so smooth an ease
My thoughts I speak, and what I speak doth flow
In verse, and that my verse best wits doth please?
Guess me the cause—what is it thus?—fye, no!
Or so?—much less. How then? sure thus it is,
My lips are sweet, inspir'd with Stella's kiss.

X

Of all the kings that ever here did reign,
Edward, named Fourth, as first in praise I name.
Not for his fair outside, nor well-lined brain—
Although less gifts imp feathers oft on Fame.
Nor that he could, young-wise, wise-valiant, frame
His sire's revenge, join'd with a kingdom's gain;
And, gain'd by Mars could yet mad Mars so tame,
That Balance weigh'd what Sword did late obtain.
Nor that he made the Floure-de-luce so 'fraid,
Though strongly hedged of bloody Lions' paws,

That witty Lewis to him a tribute paid.
Nor this, nor that, nor any such small cause—
But only, for this worthy knight durst prove
To lose his crown rather than fail his love.

XI

O happy Thames, that didst my STELLA bear,
I saw thyself, with many a smiling line
Upon thy cheerful face, Joy's livery wear,
While those fair planets on thy streams did shine.
The boat for joy could not to dance forbear,
While wanton winds, with beauty so divine
Ravish'd, stay'd not, till in her golden hair
They did themselves (O sweetest prison) twine.
And fain those Æol's youth there would their stay
Have made; but, forced by nature still to fly,
First did with puffing kiss those locks display.
She, so dishevell'd, blush'd; from window I
With sight thereof cried out, O fair disgrace,
Let Honour's self to thee grant highest place!

XII

Highway, since you my chief Parnassus be;
And that my Muse, to some ears not unsweet,
Tempers her words to trampling horses' feet,
More soft than to a chamber melody;
Now blessed You bear onward blessed Me
To Her, where I my heart safe left shall meet,
My Muse and I must you of duty greet
With thanks and wishes, wishing thankfully.
Be you still fair, honour'd by public heed,
By no encroachment wrong'd, nor time forgot;
Nor blamed for blood, nor shamed for sinful deed.
And that you know, I envy you no lot
Of highest wish, I wish you so much bliss,
Hundreds of years you STELLA's feet may kiss.

Of the foregoing, the first, the second, and the last sonnet, are my favourites. But the general beauty of them all is, that they are so perfectly characteristical. The spirit of "learning and of chivalry,"—of which union, Spenser has entitled Sydney to have been the "president,"—shines through them. I confess I can see nothing of the "jejune" or "frigid" in them; much less of the "stiff" and "cumbrous"—which I have sometimes heard objected to the Arcadia. The verse runs off swiftly and gallantly. It might have been tuned to the trumpet; or tempered (as himself expresses it) to "trampling horses' feet." They abound in felicitous phrases—

> O heav'nly Fool, thy most kiss-worthy face—
> *Eighth Sonnet.*

> —Sweet pillows, sweetest bed;
> A chamber deaf to noise, and blind to light;
> A rosy garland, and a weary head.
> *Second Sonnet.*

> —That sweet enemy,—France—
> *Fifth Sonnet.*

But they are not rich in words only, in vague and unlocalised feelings—the failing too much of some poetry of the present day—they are full, material, and circumstantiated. Time and place appropriates every one of them. It is not a fever of passion wasting itself upon a thin diet of dainty words, but a

transcendent passion pervading and illuminating action, pursuits, studies, feats of arms, the opinions of contemporaries, and his judgment of them. An historical thread runs through them, which almost affixes a date to them; marks the *when* and *where* they were written.

I have dwelt the longer upon what I conceive the merit of these poems, because I have been hurt by the wantonness (I wish I could treat it by a gentler name) with which W. H. takes every occasion of insulting the memory of Sir Philip Sydney. But the decisions of the Author of Table Talk, etc. (most profound and subtle where they are, as for the most part, just), are more safely to be relied upon, on subjects and authors he has a partiality for, than on such as he has conceived an accidental prejudice against. Milton wrote sonnets, and was a king-hater; and it was congenial perhaps to sacrifice a courtier to a patriot. But I was unwilling to lose a *fine idea* from my mind. The noble images, passions, sentiments, and poetical delicacies of character, scattered all over the Arcadia (spite of some stiffness and encumberment), justify to me the character which his contemporaries have left us of the writer. I cannot think with the Critic, that Sir Philip Sydney was that *opprobrious thing* which a foolish nobleman in his insolent hostility chose to term him. I call to mind the epitaph made on him, to guide me to juster thoughts of him; and I repose upon the beautiful lines in the "Friend's Pas-

sion for his Astrophel," printed with the Elegies of Spenser and others.

You knew—who knew not Astrophel?
(That I should live to say I knew,
And have not in possession still!)
Things known permit me to renew—
  Of him you know his merit such,
  I cannot say—you hear—too much.

Within these woods of Arcady
He chief delight and pleasure took;
And on the mountain Partheny,
Upon the crystal liquid brook,
  The Muses met him every day,
  That taught him sing, to write, and say.

When he descended down the mount,
His personage seemed most divine:
A thousand graces one might count
Upon his lovely cheerful eyne.
  To hear him speak, and sweetly smile,
  You were in Paradise the while.

A sweet attractive kind of grace;
A full assurance given by looks;
Continual comfort in a face,
The lineaments of Gospel books—
  I trow that count'nance cannot lye,
  Whose thoughts are legible in the eye.

* * * * *

Above all others this is he,
Which erst approvèd in his song,
That love and honour might agree,
And that pure love will do no wrong.
  Sweet saints, it is no sin or blame
  To love a man of virtuous name.

Did never Love so sweetly breathe
In any mortal breast before;
Did never Muse inspire beneath
A Poet's brain with finer store!
He wrote of Love with high conceit,
And Beauty rear'd above her height.

Or let any one read the deeper sorrows (grief running into rage) in the Poem,—the last in the collection accompanying the above,—which from internal testimony I believe to be Lord Brooke's—beginning with "Silence augmenteth grief,"—and then seriously ask himself, whether the subject of such absorbing and confounding regrets could have been *that thing* which Lord Oxford termed him.

NEWSPAPERS
THIRTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

DAN STUART once told us, that he did not remember that he ever deliberately walked into the Exhibition at Somerset House in his life. He might occasionally have escorted a party of ladies across the way that were going in, but he never went in of his own head. Yet the office of the *Morning Post* newspaper stood then just where it does now—we are carrying you back, reader, some thirty years or more—with its gilt-globe-topt front facing that emporium of our artists' grand Annual Exposure. We sometimes wish that we had observed the same abstinence with Daniel.

A word or two of D. S. He ever appeared to us one of the finest-tempered of Editors. Perry, of the *Morning Chronicle*, was equally pleasant, with a dash, no slight one either, of the courtier. S. was frank, plain, and English all over. We have worked for both these gentlemen.

It is soothing to contemplate the head of the Ganges; to trace the first little bubblings of a mighty river,

> With holy reverence to approach the rocks,
> Whence glide the streams renowned in ancient song.

Fired with a perusal of the Abyssinian Pilgrim's exploratory ramblings after the cradle of the infant

Nilus, we well remember on one fine summer holyday (a "whole day's leave" we called it at Christ's Hospital) sallying forth at rise of sun, not very well provisioned either for such an undertaking, to trace the current of the New River—Middletonian stream!—to its scaturient source, as we had read, in meadows by fair Amwell. Gallantly did we commence our solitary quest—for it was essential to the dignity of a DISCOVERY, that no eye of schoolboy, save our own, should beam on the detection. By flowery spots, and verdant lanes skirting Hornsey, Hope trained us on in many a baffling turn; endless, hopeless meanders, as it seemed; or as if the jealous waters had *dodged* us, reluctant to have the humble spot of their nativity revealed; till spent, and nigh famished, before set of the same sun, we sate down somewhere by Bowes Farm, near Tottenham, with a tithe of our proposed labours only yet accomplished; sorely convinced in spirit, that that Brucian enterprise was as yet too arduous for our young shoulders.

Not more refreshing to the thirsty curiosity of the traveller is the tracing of some mighty waters up to their shallow fontlet, than it is to a pleased and candid reader to go back to the inexperienced essays, the first callow flights in authorship, of some established name in literature; from the Gnat which preluded to the Æneid, to the Duck which Samuel Johnson trod on.

In those days, every Morning Paper, as an essen-

tial retainer to its establishment, kept an author, who was bound to furnish daily a quantum of witty paragraphs. Sixpence a joke—and it was thought pretty high too—was Dan Stuart's settled remuneration in these cases. The chat of the day—scandal, but, above all, *dress*—furnished the material. The length of no paragraph was to exceed seven lines. Shorter they might be, but they must be poignant.

A fashion of *flesh*, or rather *pink*-coloured hose for the ladies, luckily coming up at the juncture when we were on our probation for the place of Chief Jester to S.'s Paper, established our reputation in that line. We were pronounced a "capital hand." O the conceits which we varied upon *red* in all its prismatic differences! from the trite and obvious flower of Cytherea, to the flaming costume of the lady that has her sitting upon "many waters." Then there was the collateral topic of ankles. What an occasion to a truly chaste writer, like ourself, of touching that nice brink, and yet never tumbling over it, of a seemingly ever approximating something "not quite proper"; while, like a skilful posture-master, balancing betwixt decorums and their opposites, he keeps the line, from which a hair's-breadth deviation is destruction; hovering in the confines of light and darkness, or where "both seem either"; a hazy uncertain delicacy; Autolycus-like in the Play, still putting off his expectant auditory with "Whoop, do me no harm, good man!" But above all, that conceit arrided us most at that time,

and still tickles our midriff to remember, where, allusively to the flight of Astræa—*ultima Cœlestûm terras reliquit*—we pronounced—in reference to the stockings still—that MODESTY, TAKING HER FINAL LEAVE OF MORTALS, HER LAST BLUSH WAS VISIBLE IN HER ASCENT TO THE HEAVENS BY THE TRACT OF THE GLOWING INSTEP. This might be called the crowning conceit: and was esteemed tolerable writing in those days.

But the fashion of jokes, with all other things, passes away; as did the transient mode which had so favoured us. The ankles of our fair friends in a few weeks began to reassume their whiteness, and left us scarce a leg to stand upon. Other female whims followed, but none, methought, so pregnant, so invitatory of shrewd conceits, and more than single meanings.

Somebody has said, that to swallow six cross-buns daily consecutively for a fortnight, would surfeit the stoutest digestion. But to have to furnish as many jokes daily, and that not for a fortnight, but for a long twelvemonth, as we were constrained to do, was a little harder exaction. "Man goeth forth to his work until the evening"—from a reasonable hour in the morning, we presume it was meant. Now, as our main occupation took us up from eight till five every day in the city; and as our evening hours, at that time of life, had generally to do with anything rather than business, it follows, that the only time we could spare for this manufactory of jokes—our

supplementary livelihood, that supplied us in every want beyond mere bread and cheese—was exactly that part of the day which (as we have heard of No Man's Land) may be fitly denominated No Man's Time; that is, no time in which a man ought to be up, and awake, in. To speak more plainly, it is that time of an hour, or an hour and a half's duration, in which a man, whose occasions call him up so preposterously, has to wait for his breakfast.

O those head-aches at dawn of day, when at five, or half-past five in summer, and not much later in the dark seasons, we were compelled to rise, having been perhaps not above four hours in bed—(for we were no go-to-beds with the lamb, though we anticipated the lark ofttimes in her rising—we like a parting cup at midnight, as all young men did before these effeminate times, and to have our friends about us—we were not constellated under Aquarius that watery sign, and therefore incapable of Bacchus, cold, washy, bloodless—we were none of your Basilian watersponges, nor had taken our degrees at Mount Ague—we were right toping Capulets, jolly companions, we and they)—but to have to get up, as we said before, curtailed of half our fair sleep, fasting, with only a dim vista of refreshing Bohea in the distance—to be necessitated to rouse ourselves at the detestable rap of an old hag of a domestic, who seemed to take a diabolical pleasure in her announcement that it was "time to rise"; and whose chappy knuckles we have often yearned

to amputate, and string them up at our chamber door, to be a terror to all such unseasonable rest-breakers in future—

"Facil" and sweet, as Virgil sings, had been the "descending" of the over-night, balmy the first sinking of the heavy head upon the pillow; but to get up, as he goes on to say,

—revocare gradus, superasque evadere ad auras—

and to get up, moreover, to make jokes with malice prepended—there was the "labour," there the "work."

No Egyptian taskmaster ever devised a slavery like to that, our slavery. No fractious operants ever turned out for half the tyranny which this necessity exercised upon us. Half a dozen jests in a day (bating Sundays too), why, it seems nothing! We make twice the number every day in our lives as a matter of course, and claim no Sabbatical exemptions. But then they come into our head. But when the head has to go out to them—when the mountain must go to Mahomet—

Reader, try it for once, only for a short twelvemonth.

It was not every week that a fashion of pink stockings came up; but mostly, instead of it, some rugged untractable subject; some topic impossible to be contorted into the risible; some feature, upon which no smile could play; some flint, from which no process of ingenuity could procure a scintillation.

There they lay; there your appointed tale of brick-making was set before you, which you must finish, with or without straw, as it happened. The craving Dragon—*the Public*—like him in Bel's Temple—must be fed, it expected its daily rations; and Daniel, and ourselves, to do us justice, did the best we could on this side bursting him.

While we were wringing out coy sprightlinesses for the *Post*, and writhing under the toil of what is called "easy writing," Bob Allen, our *quondam* schoolfellow, was tapping his impracticable brains in a like service for the *Oracle*. Not that Robert troubled himself much about wit. If his paragraphs had a sprightly air about them, it was sufficient. He carried this nonchalance so far at last, that a matter of intelligence, and that no very important one, was not seldom palmed upon his employers for a good jest; for example sake—"*Walking yesterday morning casually down Snow Hill, who should we meet but Mr. Deputy Humphreys! we rejoice to add, that the worthy Deputy appeared to enjoy a good state of health. We do not remember ever to have seen him look better.*" This gentleman, so surprisingly met upon Snow Hill, from some peculiarities in gait or gesture, was a constant butt for mirth to the small paragraph-mongers of the day; and our friend thought that he might have his fling at him with the rest. We met A. in Holborn shortly after this extraordinary rencounter, which he told with tears of satisfaction in his eyes, and chuckling at

the anticipated effects of its announcement next day in the paper.

We did not quite comprehend where the wit of it lay at the time; nor was it easy to be detected, when the thing came out advantaged by type and letterpress. He had better have met anything that morning than a Common Council Man. His services were shortly after dispensed with, on the plea that his paragraphs of late had been deficient in point. The one in question, it must be owned, had an air, in the opening especially, proper to awaken curiosity; and the sentiment, or moral, wears the aspect of humanity and good neighbourly feeling. But somehow the conclusion was not judged altogether to answer to the magnificent promise of the premises. We traced our friend's pen afterwards in the *True Briton*, the *Star*, the *Traveller*,—from all which he was successively dismissed, the Proprietors having "no further occasion for his services." Nothing was easier than to detect him. When wit failed, or topics ran low, there constantly appeared the following—"*It is not generally known that the three Blue Balls at the Pawnbrokers' shops are the ancient arms of Lombardy. The Lombards were the first money-brokers in Europe.*" Bob has done more to set the public right on this important point of blazonry, than the whole College of Heralds.

The appointment of a regular wit has long ceased to be a part of the economy of a Morning Paper. Editors find their own jokes, or do as well without

them. Parson Este, and Topham, brought up the set custom of "witty paragraphs" first in the *World*. Boaden was a reigning paragraphist in his day, and succeeded poor Allen in the *Oracle*. But, as we said, the fashion of jokes passes away; and it would be difficult to discover in the biographer of Mrs. Siddons, any traces of that vivacity and fancy which charmed the whole town at the commencement of the present century. Even the prelusive delicacies of the present writer—the curt "Astræan allusion"—would be thought pedantic and out of date, in these days.

From the office of the *Morning Post* (for we may as well exhaust our Newspaper Reminiscences at once) by change of property in the paper, we were transferred, mortifying exchange! to the office of the *Albion* Newspaper, late Rackstrow's Museum, in Fleet street. What a transition—from a handsome apartment, from rosewood desks and silver inkstands, to an office—no office, but a *den* rather, but just redeemed from the occupation of dead monsters, of which it seemed redolent—from the centre of loyalty and fashion, to a focus of vulgarity and sedition! Here in murky closet, inadequate from its square contents to the receipt of the two bodies of Editor and humble paragraph-maker, together at one time, sat in the discharge of his new editorial functions (the "Bigod" of Elia) the redoubted John Fenwick.

F., without a guinea in his pocket, and having

left not many in the pockets of his friends whom he might command, had purchased (on tick, doubtless) the whole and sole Editorship, Proprietorship, with all the rights and titles (such as they were worth) of the *Albion* from one Lovell; of whom we know nothing, save that he had stood in the pillory for a libel on the Prince of Wales. With this hopeless concern—for it had been sinking ever since its commencement, and could now reckon upon not more than a hundred subscribers—F. resolutely determined upon pulling down the Government in the first instance, and making both our fortunes by way of corollary. For seven weeks and more did this infatuated Democrat go about borrowing seven-shilling pieces, and lesser coin, to meet the daily demands of the Stamp Office, which allowed no credit to publications of that side in politics. An outcast from politer bread, we attached our small talents to the forlorn fortunes of our friend. Our occupation now was to write treason.

Recollections of feelings—which were all that now remained from our first boyish heats kindled by the French Revolution, when, if we were misled, we erred in the company of some who are accounted very good men now—rather than any tendency at this time to Republican doctrines—assisted us in assuming a style of writing, while the paper lasted, consonant in no very under tone to the right earnest fanaticism of F. Our cue was now to insinuate, rather than recommend, possible abdi-

cations. Blocks, axes, Whitehall tribunals, were covered with flowers of so cunning a periphrasis—as Mr. Bayes says, never naming the *thing* directly—that the keen eye of an Attorney-General was insufficient to detect the lurking snake among them. There were times, indeed, when we sighed for our more gentleman-like occupation under Stuart. But with change of masters it is ever change of service. Already one paragraph, and another, as we learned afterwards from a gentleman at the Treasury, had begun to be marked at that office, with a view of its being submitted at least to the attention of the proper Law Officers—when an unlucky, or rather lucky epigram from our pen, aimed at Sir J——s M——h, who was on the eve of departing for India to reap the fruits of his apostasy, as F. pronounced it (it is hardly worth particularizing), happening to offend the nice sense of Lord (or, as he then delighted to be called) Citizen Stanhope, deprived F. at once of the last hopes of a guinea from the last patron that had stuck by us; and breaking up our establishment, left us to the safe, but somewhat mortifying, neglect of the Crown Lawyers. It was about this time, or a little earlier, that Dan Stuart made that curious confession to us, that he had "never deliberately walked into an Exhibition at Somerset House in his life."

BARRENNESS OF THE IMAGINATIVE FACULTY IN THE PRODUCTIONS OF MODERN ART

HOGARTH excepted, can we produce any one painter within the last fifty years, or since the humour of exhibiting began, that has treated a story *imaginatively?* By this we mean, upon whom his subject has so acted, that it has seemed to direct *him*—not to be arranged by him? Any upon whom its leading or collateral points have impressed themselves so tyrannically, that he dared not treat it otherwise, lest he should falsify a revelation? Any that has imparted to his compositions, not merely so much truth as is enough to convey a story with clearness, but that individualizing property, which should keep the subject so treated distinct in feature from every other subject, however similar, and to common apprehensions almost identical; so that we might say, this and this part could have found an appropriate place in no other picture in the world but this? Is there anything in modern art—we will not demand that it should be equal—but in any way analogous to what Titian has effected, in that wonderful bringing together of two times in the "Ariadne," in the National Gallery? Precipitous, with his reeling satyr rout about him, re-peopling and re-illuming suddenly the waste places, drunk

with a new fury beyond the grape, Bacchus, born in fire, fire-like flings himself at the Cretan. This is the time present. With this telling of the story, an artist, and no ordinary one, might remain richly proud. Guido, in his harmonious version of it, saw no further. But from the depths of the imaginative spirit Titian has recalled past time, and laid it contributory with the present to one simultaneous effect. With the desert all ringing with the mad cymbals of his followers, made lucid with the presence and new offers of a god,—as if unconscious of Bacchus, or but idly casting her eyes as upon some unconcerning pageant—her soul undistracted from Theseus—Ariadne is still pacing the solitary shore in as much heart-silence, and in almost the same local solitude, with which she awoke at daybreak to catch the forlorn last glances of the sail that bore away the Athenian.

Here are two points miraculously co-uniting; fierce society, with the feeling of solitude still absolute; noon-day revelations, with the accidents of the dull gray dawn unquenched and lingering; the *present* Bacchus, with the *past* Ariadne: two stories, with double Time; separate, and harmonizing. Had the artist made the woman one shade less indifferent to the God; still more, had she expressed a rapture at his advent, where would have been the story of the mighty desolation of the heart previous? merged in the insipid accident of a flattering offer met with a welcome acceptance. The broken heart

for Theseus was not lightly to be pieced up by a God.

We have before us a fine rough print, from a picture by Raphael in the Vatican. It is the Presentation of the new-born Eve to Adam by the Almighty. A fairer mother of mankind we might imagine, and a goodlier sire perhaps of men since born. But these are matters subordinate to the conception of the *situation*, displayed in this extraordinary production. A tolerable modern artist would have been satisfied with tempering certain raptures of connubial anticipation, with a suitable acknowledgment to the Giver of the blessing, in the countenance of the first bridegroom: something like the divided attention of the child (Adam was here a child man) between the given toy, and the mother who had just blest it with the bauble. This is the obvious, the first-sight view, the superficial. An artist of a higher grade, considering the awful presence they were in, would have taken care to subtract something from the expression of the more human passion, and to heighten the more spiritual one. This would be as much as an exhibition-goer, from the opening of Somerset House to last year's show, has been encouraged to look for. It is obvious to hint at a lower expression yet, in a picture that, for respects of drawing and colouring, might be deemed not wholly inadmissible within these art-fostering walls, in which the raptures should be as ninety-nine, the gratitude as one, or perhaps Zero!

By neither the one passion nor the other has Raphael expounded the situation of Adam. Singly upon his brow sits the absorbing sense of wonder at the created miracle. The *moment* is seized by the intuitive artist, perhaps not self-conscious of his art, in which neither of the conflicting emotions—a moment how abstracted!—have had time to spring up, or to battle for indecorous mastery.—We have seen a landscape of a justly-admired neoteric, in which he aimed at delineating a fiction, one of the most severely beautiful in antiquity—the gardens of the Hesperides. To do Mr. —— justice, he had painted a laudable orchard, with fitting seclusion, and a veritable dragon (of which a Polypheme, by Poussin, is somehow a fac-simile for the situation), looking over into the world shut out backwards, so that none but a "still-climbing Hercules" could hope to catch a peep at the admired Ternary of Recluses. No conventual porter could keep his keys better than this custos with the "lidless eyes." He not only sees that none *do* intrude into that privacy, but, as clear as daylight, that none but *Hercules aut Diabolus* by any manner of means *can*. So far all is well. We have absolute solitude here or nowhere. *Ab extra*, the damsels are snug enough. But here the artist's courage seems to have failed him. He began to pity his pretty charge, and, to comfort the irksomeness, has peopled their solitude with a bevy of fair attendants, maids of honour, or ladies of the bed-chamber, according to the approved eti-

quette at a court of the nineteenth century; giving to the whole scene the air of a *fête-champêtre*, if we will but excuse the absence of the gentlemen. This is well, and Watteauish. But what is become of the solitary mystery—the

> Daughters three,
> That sing around the golden tree?

This is not the way in which Poussin would have treated this subject.

The paintings, or rather the stupendous architectural designs, of a modern artist, have been urged as objections to the theory of our motto. They are of a character, we confess, to stagger it. His towered structures are of the highest order of the material sublime. Whether they were dreams, or transcripts of some elder workmanship—Assyrian ruins old—restored by this mighty artist, they satisfy our most stretched and craving conceptions of the glories of the antique world. It is a pity that they were ever peopled. On that side, the imagination of the artist halts, and appears defective. Let us examine the point of the story in the "Belshazzar's Feast." We will introduce it by an apposite anecdote.

The court historians of the day record, that at the first dinner given by the late King (then Prince Regent) at the Pavilion, the following characteristic frolic was played off. The guests were select and admiring; the banquet profuse and admirable; the

lights lustrous and oriental; the eye was perfectly dazzled with the display of plate, among which the great gold salt-cellar, brought from the regalia in the Tower for this especial purpose, itself a tower! stood conspicuous for its magnitude. And now the Rev. * * *, the then admired court Chaplain, was proceeding with the grace, when, at a signal given, the lights were suddenly overcast, and a huge transparency was discovered, in which glittered in gold letters —

"BRIGHTON — EARTHQUAKE — SWALLOW-UP-ALIVE!"

Imagine the confusion of the guests; the Georges and garters, jewels, bracelets, moulted upon the occasion! The fans dropped, and picked up the next morning by the sly court-pages! Mrs. Fitz-what's-her-name fainting, and the Countess of * * * holding the smelling-bottle, till the good-humoured Prince caused harmony to be restored, by calling in fresh candles, and declaring that the whole was nothing but a pantomime *hoax*, got up by the ingenious Mr. Farley, of Covent Garden, from hints which his Royal Highness himself had furnished! Then imagine the infinite applause that followed, the mutual rallyings, the declarations that "they were not much frightened," of the assembled galaxy.

The point of time in the picture exactly answers to the appearance of the transparency in the anecdote. The huddle, the flutter, the bustle, the

escape, the alarm, and the mock alarm; the prettinesses heightened by consternation; the courtier's fear which was flattery; and the lady's which was affectation; all that we may conceive to have taken place in a mob of Brighton courtiers, sympathizing with the well-acted surprise of their sovereign; all this, and no more, is exhibited by the well-dressed lords and ladies in the Hall of Belus. Just this sort of consternation we have seen among a flock of disquieted wild geese at the report only of a gun having gone off!

But is this vulgar fright, this mere animal anxiety for the preservation of their persons—such as we have witnessed at a theatre, when a slight alarm of fire has been given—an adequate exponent of a supernatural terror? the way in which the finger of God, writing judgments, would have been met by the withered conscience? There is a human fear, and a divine fear. The one is disturbed, restless, and bent upon escape; the other is bowed down, effortless, passive. When the spirit appeared before Eliphaz in the visions of the night, and the hair of his flesh stood up, was it in the thoughts of the Temanite to ring the bell of his chamber, or to call up the servants? But let us see in the text what there is to justify all this huddle of vulgar consternation.

From the words of Daniel it appears that Belshazzar had made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. The

golden and silver vessels are gorgeously enumerated, with the princes, the king's concubines, and his wives. Then follows—

"In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the *king* saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the *king's* countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosened, and his knees smote one against another."

This is the plain text. By no hint can it be otherwise inferred, but that the appearance was solely confined to the fancy of Belshazzar, that his single brain was troubled. Not a word is spoken of its being seen by any else there present, not even by the queen herself, who merely undertakes for the interpretation of the phenomenon, as related to her, doubtless, by her husband. The lords are simply said to be astonished; *i.e.* at the trouble and the change of countenance in their sovereign. Even the prophet does not appear to have seen the scroll, which the king saw. He recalls it only, as Joseph did the Dream to the King of Egypt. "Then was the part of the hand sent from him [the Lord], and this writing was written." He speaks of the phantasm as past.

Then what becomes of this needless multiplication of the miracle? this message to a royal conscience, singly expressed—for it was said, "Thy kingdom is divided,"—simultaneously impressed upon the fan-

cies of a thousand courtiers, who were implied in it neither directly nor grammatically?

But, admitting the artist's own version of the story, and that the sight was seen also by the thousand courtiers—let it have been visible to all Babylon—as the knees of Belshazzar were shaken, and his countenance troubled, even so would the knees of every man in Babylon, and their countenances, as of an individual man, have been troubled; bowed, bent down, so would they have remained, stupor-fixed, with no thought of struggling with that inevitable judgment.

Not all that is optically possible to be seen, is to be shown in every picture. The eye delightedly dwells upon the brilliant individualities in a "Marriage at Cana," by Veronese, or Titian, to the very texture and colour of the wedding garments, the ring glittering upon the bride's finger, the metal and fashion of the wine-pots; for at such seasons there is leisure and luxury to be curious. But in a "day of judgment," or in a "day of lesser horrors, yet divine," as at the impious feast of Belshazzar, the eye should see, as the actual eye of an agent or patient in the immediate scene would see, only in masses and indistinction. Not only the female attire and jewelry exposed to the critical eye of the fashion, as minutely as the dresses in a lady's magazine, in the criticised picture—but perhaps the curiosities of anatomical science, and studied diversities of posture, in the falling angels and sinners of Michael

Angelo,—have no business in their great subjects. There was no leisure for them.

By a wise falsification, the great masters of painting got at their true conclusions; by not showing the actual appearances, that is, all that was to be seen at any given moment by an indifferent eye, but only what the eye might be supposed to see in the doing or suffering of some portentous action. Suppose the moment of the swallowing up of Pompeii. There they were to be seen—houses, columns, architectural proportions, differences of public and private buildings, men and women at their standing occupations, the diversified thousand postures, attitudes, dresses, in some confusion truly, but physically they were visible. But what eye saw them at that eclipsing moment, which reduces confusion to a kind of unity, and when the senses are upturned from their proprieties, when sight and hearing are a feeling only? A thousand years have passed, and we are at leisure to contemplate the weaver fixed standing at his shuttle, the baker at his oven, and to turn over with antiquarian coolness the pots and pans of Pompeii.

"Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon." Who, in reading this magnificent Hebraism, in his conception, sees aught but the heroic son of Nun, with the outstretched arm, and the greater and lesser light obsequious? Doubtless there were to be seen hill and dale, and chariots and horsemen, on open plain, or

winding by secret defiles, and all the circumstances and stratagems of war. But whose eyes would have been conscious of this array at the interposition of the synchronic miracle? Yet in the picture of this subject by the artist of the "Belshazzar's Feast"—no ignoble work, either—the marshalling and landscape of the war is everything, the miracle sinks into an anecdote of the day; and the eye may "dart through rank and file traverse" for some minutes, before it shall discover, among his armed followers, *which is Joshua!* Not modern art alone, but ancient, where only it is to be found if anywhere, can be detected erring, from defect of this imaginative faculty. The world has nothing to show of the preternatural in painting, transcending the figure of Lazarus bursting his grave-clothes, in the great picture at Angerstein's. It seems a thing between two beings. A ghastly horror at itself struggles with newly-apprehending gratitude at second life bestowed. It cannot forget that it was a ghost. It has hardly felt that it is a body. It has to tell of the world of spirits.—Was it from a feeling, that the crowd of half-impassioned bystanders, and the still more irrelevant herd of passers-by at a distance, who have not heard, or but faintly have been told of the passing miracle, admirable as they are in design and hue—for it is a glorified work—do not respond adequately to the action—that the single figure of the Lazarus has been attributed to Michael Angelo, and the mighty Sebastian unfairly robbed

of the fame of the greater half of the interest? Now that there were not indifferent passers-by within actual scope of the eyes of those present at the miracle, to whom the sound of it had but faintly, or not at all, reached, it would be hardihood to deny; but would they see them? or can the mind in the conception of it admit of such unconcerning objects; can it think of them at all? or what associating league to the imagination can there be between the seers and the seers not, of a presential miracle?

Were an artist to paint upon demand a picture of a Dryad, we will ask whether, in the present low state of expectation, the patron would not, or ought not be fully satisfied with a beautiful naked figure recumbent under wide-stretched oaks? Dis-seat those woods, and place the same figure among fountains, and falls of pellucid water, and you have a—Naïad! Not so in a rough print we have seen after Julio Romano, we think—for it is long since —*there*, by no process, with mere change of scene, could the figure have reciprocated characters. Long, grotesque, fantastic, yet with a grace of her own, beautiful in convolution and distortion, linked to her connatural tree, co-twisting with its limbs her own, till both seemed either—these, animated branches; those, disanimated members—yet the animal and vegetable lives sufficiently kept distinct —*his* Dryad lay—an approximation of two natures, which to conceive, it must be seen; analogous to,

not the same with, the delicacies of Ovidian transformations.

To the lowest subjects, and, to a superficial comprehension, the most barren, the Great Masters gave loftiness and fruitfulness. The large eye of genius saw in the meanness of present objects their capabilities of treatment from their relations to some grand Past or Future. How has Raphael—we must still linger about the Vatican—treated the humble craft of the ship-builder, in *his* "Building of the Ark"? It is in that scriptural series, to which we have referred, and which, judging from some fine rough old graphic sketches of them which we possess, seem to be of a higher and more poetic grade than even the Cartoons. The dim of sight are the timid and the shrinking. There is a cowardice in modern art. As the Frenchman, of whom Coleridge's friend made the prophetic guess at Rome, from the beard and horns of the Moses of Michael Angelo collected no inferences beyond that of a He Goat and a Cornuto; so from this subject, of mere mechanic promise, it would instinctively turn away, as from one incapable of investiture with any grandeur. The dock-yards at Woolwich would object derogatory associations. The depôt at Chatham would be the mote and the beam in its intellectual eye. But not to the nautical preparations in the ship-yards of Civita Vecchia did Raphael look for instructions, when he imagined the building of the Vessel that was to be conservatory of the wrecks of the species

of drowned mankind. In the intensity of the action he keeps ever out of sight the meanness of the operation. There is the Patriarch, in calm forethought, and with holy prescience, giving directions. And there are his agents—the solitary but sufficient Three—hewing, sawing, every one with the might and earnestness of a Demiurgus; under some instinctive rather than technical guidance! giant-muscled; every one a Hercules; or liker to those Vulcanian Three, that in sounding caverns under Mongibello wrought in fire—Brontes, and black Steropes, and Pyracmon. So work the workmen that should repair a world!

Artists again err in the confounding of *poetic* with *pictorial subjects*. In the latter, the exterior accidents are nearly everything, the unseen qualities as nothing. Othello's colour—the infirmities and corpulence of a Sir John Falstaff—do they haunt us perpetually in the reading? or are they obtruded upon our conceptions one time for ninety-nine that we are lost in admiration at the respective moral or intellectual attributes of the character? But in a picture Othello is *always* a Blackamoor; and the other only Plump Jack. Deeply corporealized, and enchained hopelessly in the grovelling fetters of externality, must be the mind, to which, in its better moments, the image of the high-souled, high-intelligenced Quixote—the errant Star of Knighthood, made more tender by eclipse—has never presented itself divested from the unhallowed accompaniment

of a Sancho, or a rabblement at the heels of Rosinante. That man has read his book by halves; he has laughed, mistaking his author's purport, which was —tears. The artist that pictures Quixote (and it is in this degrading point that he is every season held up at our Exhibitions) in the shallow hope of exciting mirth, would have joined the rabble at the heels of his starved steed. We wish not to see *that* counterfeited, which we would not have wished to see in the reality. Conscious of the heroic inside of the noble Quixote, who, on hearing that his withered person was passing, would have stepped over his threshold to gaze upon his forlorn habiliments, and the "strange bed-fellows which misery brings a man acquainted with"? Shade of Cervantes! who in thy Second Part could put into the mouth of thy Quixote those high aspirations of a superchivalrous gallantry, where he replies to one of the shepherdesses, apprehensive that he would spoil their pretty net-works, and inviting him to be a guest with them, in accents like these: "Truly, fairest Lady, Actæon was not more astonished when he saw Diana bathing herself at the fountain, than I have been in beholding your beauty: I commend the manner of your pastime, and thank you for your kind offers; and, if I may serve you, so I may be sure you will be obeyed, you may command me: for my profession is this, To show myself thankful, and a doer of good to all sorts of people, especially of the rank that your person shows you to be; and

if those nets, as they take up but a little piece of ground, should take up the whole world, I would seek out new worlds to pass through, rather than break them: and (he adds) that you may give credit to this my exaggeration, behold at least he that promiseth you this, is Don Quixote de la Mancha, if haply this name hath come to your hearing." Illustrious Romancer! were the "fine frenzies," which possessed the brain of thy own Quixote, a fit subject, as in this Second Part, to be exposed to the jeers of Duennas and Serving-men? to be monstered, and shown up at the heartless banquets of great men? Was that pitiable infirmity, which in thy First Part misleads him, *always from within*, into half-ludicrous, but more than half-compassionable and admirable errors, not infliction enough from heaven, that men by studied artifices must devise and practise upon the humour, to inflame where they should soothe it? Why, Goneril would have blushed to practise upon the abdicated king at this rate, and the she-wolf Regan not have endured to play the pranks upon his fled wits, which thou hast made thy Quixote suffer in Duchesses' halls, and at the hands of that unworthy nobleman.[1]

In the First Adventures, even, it needed all the art of the most consummate artist in the Book way that the world hath yet seen, to keep up in the mind of the reader the heroic attributes of the char-

[1] Yet from this Second Part, our cried-up pictures are mostly selected; the waiting-women with beards, etc.

acter without relaxing; so as absolutely that they should suffer no alloy from the debasing fellowship of the clown. If it ever obtrudes itself as a disharmony, are we inclined to laugh; or not, rather, to indulge a contrary emotion?—Cervantes, stung, perchance, by the relish with which *his* Reading Public had received the fooleries of the man, more to their palates than the generosities of the master, in the sequel let his pen run riot, lost the harmony and the balance, and sacrificed a great idea to the taste of his contemporaries. We know that in the present day the Knight has fewer admirers than the Squire. Anticipating, what did actually happen to him—as afterwards it did to his scarce inferior follower, the Author of "Guzman de Alfarache"—that some less knowing hand would prevent him by a spurious Second Part; and judging that it would be easier for his competitor to outbid him in the comicalities, than in the *romance*, of his work, he abandoned his Knight, and has fairly set up the Squire for his Hero. For what else has he unsealed the eyes of Sancho? and instead of that twilight state of semi-insanity—the madness at second-hand—the contagion, caught from a stronger mind infected—that war between native cunning, and hereditary deference, with which he has hitherto accompanied his master—two for a pair almost—does he substitute a downright Knave, with open eyes, for his own ends only following a confessed Madman; and offering at one time to lay, if not

actually laying, hands upon him! From the moment that Sancho loses his reverence, Don Quixote is become—a treatable lunatic. Our artists handle him accordingly.

THE WEDDING

I DO not know when I have been better pleased than at being invited last week to be present at the wedding of a friend's daughter. I like to make one at these ceremonies, which to us old people give back our youth in a manner, and restore our gayest season, in the remembrance of our own success, or the regrets, scarcely less tender, of our own youthful disappointments, in this point of a settlement. On these occasions I am sure to be in good humour for a week or two after, and enjoy a reflected honeymoon. Being without a family, I am flattered with these temporary adoptions into a friend's family; I feel a sort of cousinhood, or uncleship, for the season; I am inducted into degrees of affinity; and, in the participated socialities of the little community, I lay down for a brief while my solitary bachelorship. I carry this humour so far, that I take it unkindly to be left out, even when a funeral is going on in the house of a dear friend. But to my subject.——

The union itself had been long settled, but its celebration had been hitherto deferred, to an almost unreasonable state of suspense in the lovers, by some invincible prejudices which the bride's father had unhappily contracted upon the subject of the too early marriages of females. He has been lecturing any time these five years—for to that length

the courtship had been protracted—upon the propriety of putting off the solemnity, till the lady should have completed her five-and-twentieth year. We all began to be afraid that a suit, which as yet had abated of none of its ardours, might at last be lingered on, till passion had time to cool, and love go out in the experiment. But a little wheedling on the part of his wife, who was by no means a party to these overstrained notions, joined to some serious expostulations on that of his friends, who, from the growing infirmities of the old gentleman, could not promise ourselves many years' enjoyment of his company, and were anxious to bring matters to a conclusion during his lifetime, at length prevailed; and on Monday last the daughter of my old friend, Admiral ——, having attained the *womanly* age of nineteen, was conducted to the church by her pleasant cousin J——, who told some few years older.

Before the youthful part of my female readers express their indignation at the abominable loss of time occasioned to the lovers by the preposterous notions of my old friend, they will do well to consider the reluctance which a fond parent naturally feels at parting with his child. To this unwillingness, I believe, in most cases may be traced the difference of opinion on this point between child and parent, whatever pretences of interest or prudence may be held out to cover it. The hard-heartedness of fathers is a fine theme for romance writers, a sure and moving topic; but is there not something

untender, to say no more of it, in the hurry which a beloved child is sometimes in to tear herself from the paternal stock, and commit herself to strange graftings? The case is heightened where the lady, as in the present instance, happens to be an only child. I do not understand these matters experimentally, but I can make a shrewd guess at the wounded pride of a parent upon these occasions. It is no new observation, I believe, that a lover in most cases has no rival so much to be feared as the father. Certainly there is a jealousy in *unparallel subjects*, which is little less heartrending than the passion which we more strictly christen by that name. Mothers' scruples are more easily got over; for this reason, I suppose, that the protection transferred to a husband is less a derogation and a loss to their authority than to the paternal. Mothers, besides, have a trembling foresight, which paints the inconveniences (impossible to be conceived in the same degree by the other parent) of a life of forlorn celibacy, which the refusal of a tolerable match may entail upon their child. Mothers' instinct is a surer guide here than the cold reasonings of a father on such a topic. To this instinct may be imputed, and by it alone may be excused, the unbeseeming artifices, by which some wives push on the matrimonial projects of their daughters, which the husband, however approving, shall entertain with comparative indifference. A little shamelessness on this head is pardonable. With this explanation, for-

wardness becomes a grace, and maternal importunity receives the name of a virtue.—But the parson stays, while I preposterously assume his office; I am preaching, while the bride is on the threshold.

Nor let any of my female readers suppose that the sage reflections which have just escaped me have the obliquest tendency of application to the young lady, who, it will be seen, is about to venture upon a change in her condition, at a *mature and competent age*, and not without the fullest approbation of all parties. I only deprecate *very hasty marriages*.

It had been fixed that the ceremony should be gone through at an early hour, to give time for a little *dejeûne* afterwards, to which a select party of friends had been invited. We were in church a little before the clock struck eight.

Nothing could be more judicious or graceful than the dress of the bride-maids—the three charming Miss Foresters—on this morning. To give the bride an opportunity of shining singly, they had come habited all in green. I am ill at describing female apparel; but while *she* stood at the altar in vestments white and candid as her thoughts, a sacrificial whiteness, *they* assisted in robes such as might become Diana's nymphs—Foresters indeed—as such who had not yet come to the resolution of putting off cold virginity. These young maids, not being so blest as to have a mother living, I am told, keep single for their father's sake, and live altogether

so happy with their remaining parent, that the hearts of their lovers are ever broken with the prospect (so inauspicious to their hopes) of such uninterrupted and provoking home-comfort. Gallant girls! each a victim worthy of Iphigenia!

I do not know what business I have to be present in solemn places. I cannot divest me of an unseasonable disposition to levity upon the most awful occasions. I was never cut out for a public functionary. Ceremony and I have long shaken hands; but I could not resist the importunities of the young lady's father, whose gout unhappily confined him at home, to act as parent on this occasion, and *give away the bride.* Something ludicrous occurred to me at this most serious of all moments—a sense of my unfitness to have the disposal, even in imagination, of the sweet young creature beside me. I fear I was betrayed to some lightness, for the awful eye of the parson—and the rector's eye of St. Mildred's in the Poultry is no trifle of a rebuke—was upon me in an instant, souring my incipient jest to the tristful severities of a funeral.

This was the only misbehaviour which I can plead to upon this solemn occasion, unless what was objected to me after the ceremony, by one of the handsome Miss T——s, be accounted a solecism. She was pleased to say that she had never seen a gentleman before me give away a bride, in black. Now black has been my ordinary apparel so long—indeed, I take it to be the proper costume of an

author—the stage sanctions it—that to have appeared in some lighter colour would have raised more mirth at my expense than the anomaly had created censure. But I could perceive that the bride's mother, and some elderly ladies present (God bless them!) would have been well content, if I had come in any other colour than that. But I got over the omen by a lucky apologue, which I remembered out of Pilpay, or some Indian author, of all the birds being invited to the linnet's wedding, at which, when all the rest came in their gayest feathers, the raven alone apologised for his cloak because "he had no other." This tolerably reconciled the elders. But with the young people all was merriment, and shaking of hands, and congratulations, and kissing away the bride's tears, and kissings from her in return, till a young lady, who assumed some experience in these matters, having worn the nuptial bands some four or five weeks longer than her friend, rescued her, archly observing, with half an eye upon the bridegroom, that at this rate she would have "none left."

My friend the Admiral was in fine wig and buckle on this occasion—a striking contrast to his usual neglect of personal appearance. He did not once shove up his borrowed locks (his custom ever at his morning studies) to betray the few gray stragglers of his own beneath them. He wore an aspect of thoughtful satisfaction. I trembled for the hour, which at length approached, when after a protracted

breakfast of three hours—if stores of cold fowls, tongues, hams, botargoes, dried fruits, wines, cordials, etc., can deserve so meagre an appellation—the coach was announced, which was come to carry off the bride and bridegroom for a season, as custom has sensibly ordained, into the country; upon which design, wishing them a felicitous journey, let us return to the assembled guests.

> As when a well-graced actor leaves the stage,
> The eyes of men
> Are idly bent on him that enters next,

so idly did we bend our eyes upon one another, when the chief performers in the morning's pageant had vanished. None told his tale. None sipped her glass. The poor Admiral made an effort—it was not much. I had anticipated so far. Even the infinity of full satisfaction, that had betrayed itself through the prim looks and quiet deportment of his lady, began to wane into something of misgiving. No one knew whether to take their leaves or stay. We seemed assembled upon a silly occasion. In this crisis, betwixt tarrying and departure, I must do justice to a foolish talent of mine, which had otherwise like to have brought me into disgrace in the fore-part of the day; I mean a power, in any emergency, of thinking and giving vent to all manner of strange nonsense. In this awkward dilemma I found it sovereign. I rattled off some of my most excellent absurdities. All were willing to be relieved, at any ex-

pense of reason, from the pressure of the intolerable vacuum which had succeeded to the morning bustle. By this means I was fortunate in keeping together the better part of the company to a late hour; and a rubber of whist (the Admiral's favourite game) with some rare strokes of chance as well as skill, which came opportunely on his side—lengthened out till midnight—dismissed the old gentleman at last to his bed with comparatively easy spirits.

I have been at my old friend's various times since. I do not know a visiting place where every guest is so perfectly at his ease; nowhere, where harmony is so strangely the result of confusion. Everybody is at cross purposes, yet the effect is so much better than uniformity. Contradictory orders; servants pulling one way; master and mistress driving some other, yet both diverse; visitors huddled up in corners; chairs unsymmetrized; candles disposed by chance; meals at odd hours, tea and supper at once, or the latter preceding the former; the host and the guest conferring, yet each upon a different topic, each understanding himself, neither trying to understand or hear the other; draughts and politics, chess and political economy, cards and conversation on nautical matters, going on at once, without the hope, or indeed the wish, of distinguishing them, make it altogether the most perfect *concordia discors* you shall meet with. Yet somehow the old house is not quite what it should be. The Admiral still enjoys his pipe, but he has no Miss Emily to fill it

for him. The instrument stands where it stood, but she is gone, whose delicate touch could sometimes for a short minute appease the warring elements. He has learnt, as Marvel expresses it, to "make his destiny his choice." He bears bravely up, but he does not come out with his flashes of wild wit so thick as formerly. His sea-songs seldomer escape him. His wife, too, looks as if she wanted some younger body to scold and set to rights. We all miss a junior presence. It is wonderful how one young maiden freshens up, and keeps green, the paternal roof. Old and young seem to have an interest in her, so long as she is not absolutely disposed of. The youthfulness of the house is flown. Emily is married.

REJOICINGS UPON THE NEW YEAR'S COMING OF AGE

THE *Old Year* being dead, and the *New Year* coming of age, which he does, by Calendar Law, as soon as the breath is out of the old gentleman's body, nothing would serve the young spark but he must give a dinner upon the occasion, to which all the *Days* in the year were invited. The *Festivals*, whom he deputed as his stewards, were mightily taken with the notion. They had been engaged time out of mind, they said, in providing mirth and good cheer for mortals below; and it was time they should have a taste of their own bounty. It was stiffly debated among them whether the *Fasts* should be admitted. Some said the appearance of such lean, starved guests, with their mortified faces, would pervert the ends of the meeting. But the objection was overruled by *Christmas Day*, who had a design upon *Ash Wednesday* (as you shall hear), and a mighty desire to see how the old Domine would behave himself in his cups. Only the *Vigils* were requested to come with their lanterns, to light the gentlefolks home at night.

All the *Days* came to their day. Covers were provided for three hundred and sixty-five guests at the principal table; with an occasional knife and fork at the side-board for the *Twenty-Ninth of February*.

I should have told you that cards of invitation had

been issued. The carriers were the *Hours;* twelve little, merry, whirligig foot-pages, as you should desire to see, that went all round, and found out the persons invited well enough, with the exception of *Easter Day*, *Shrove Tuesday*, and a few such *Moveables*, who had lately shifted their quarters.

Well, they all met at last—foul *Days*, fine *Days*, all sorts of *Days*, and a rare din they made of it. There was nothing but, Hail! fellow *Day*, well met—brother *Day*—sister *Day*—only *Lady Day* kept a little on the aloof, and seemed somewhat scornful. Yet some said *Twelfth Day* cut her out and out, for she came in a tiffany suit, white and gold, like a queen on a frost-cake, all royal, glittering, and *Epiphanous*. The rest came, some in green, some in white—but old *Lent and his family* were not yet out of mourning. Rainy *Days* came in, dripping; and sunshiny *Days* helped them to change their stockings. *Wedding Day* was there in his marriage finery, a little the worse for wear. *Pay Day* came late, as he always does; and *Doomsday* sent word—he might be expected.

April Fool (as my young lord's jester) took upon himself to marshal the guests, and wild work he made with it. It would have posed old Erra Pater to have found out any given *Day* in the year to erect a scheme upon—good *Days*, bad *Days*, were so shuffled together, to the confounding of all sober horoscopy.

He had stuck the *Twenty-First of June* next to

the *Twenty-Second of December*, and the former looked like a Maypole siding a marrow-bone. *Ash Wednesday* got wedged in (as was concerted) betwixt *Christmas* and *Lord Mayor's Days*. Lord! how he laid about him! Nothing but barons of beef and turkeys would go down with him—to the great greasing and detriment of his new sackcloth bib and tucker. And still *Christmas Day* was at his elbow, plying him with the wassail-bowl, till he roared, and hiccupp'd, and protested there was no faith in dried ling, but commended it to the devil for a sour, windy, acrimonious, censorious, hy-po-crit-crit-critical mess, and no dish for a gentleman. Then he dipt his fist into the middle of the great custard that stood before his *left-hand neighbour*, and daubed his hungry beard all over with it, till you would have taken him for the *Last Day in December*, it so hung in icicles.

At another part of the table, *Shrove Tuesday* was helping the *Second of September* to some cock broth,—which courtesy the latter returned with the delicate thigh of a hen pheasant—so that there was no love lost for that matter. The *Last of Lent* was spunging upon *Shrove-tide's* pancakes; which *April Fool* perceiving, told him that he did well, for pancakes were proper to a *good fry-day*.

In another part, a hubbub arose about the *Thirtieth of January*, who, it seems, being a sour, puritanic character, that thought nobody's meat good or sanctified enough for him, had smuggled into

the room a calf's head, which he had had cooked at home for that purpose, thinking to feast thereon incontinently; but as it lay in the dish, *March Many-weathers*, who is a very fine lady, and subject to the meagrims, screamed out there was a "human head in the platter," and raved about Herodias' daughter to that degree, that the obnoxious viand was obliged to be removed; nor did she recover her stomach till she had gulped down a *Restorative*, confected of *Oak Apple*, which the merry *Twenty-Ninth of May* always carries about with him for that purpose.

The King's health[1] being called for after this, a notable dispute arose between the *Twelfth of August* (a zealous old Whig gentlewoman) and the *Twenty-Third of April* (a new-fangled lady of the Tory stamp), as to which of them should have the honour to propose it. *August* grew hot upon the matter, affirming time out of mind the prescriptive right to have lain with her, till her rival had basely supplanted her; whom she represented as little better than a *kept* mistress, who went about in *fine clothes*, while she (the legitimate BIRTHDAY) had scarcely a rag, etc.

April Fool, being made mediator, confirmed the right in the strongest form of words to the appellant, but decided for peace' sake that the exercise of it should remain with the present possessor. At the same time, he slyly rounded the first lady in the

[1] King George IV.

ear, that an action might lie against the Crown for *bi-geny.*

It beginning to grow a little duskish, *Candlemas* lustily bawled out for lights, which was opposed by all the *Days,* who protested against burning daylight. Then fair water was handed round in silver ewers, and the *same lady* was observed to take an unusual time in *Washing* herself.

May Day, with that sweetness which is peculiar to her, in a neat speech proposing the health of the founder, crowned her goblet (and by her example the rest of the company) with garlands. This being done, the lordly *New Year,* from the upper end of the table, in a cordial but somewhat lofty tone, returned thanks. He felt proud on an occasion of meeting so many of his worthy father's late tenants, promised to improve their farms, and at the same time to abate (if anything was found unreasonable) in their rents.

At the mention of this, the four *Quarter Days* involuntarily looked at each other, and smiled; *April Fool* whistled to an old tune of "New Brooms"; and a surly old rebel at the farther end of the table (who was discovered to be no other than the *Fifth of November*) muttered out, distinctly enough to be heard by the whole company, words to this effect —that "when the old one is gone, he is a fool that looks for a better." Which rudeness of his, the guests resenting, unanimously voted his expulsion; and the malcontent was thrust out neck

and heels into the cellar, as the properest place for such a *boutefeu* and firebrand as he had shown himself to be.

Order being restored—the young lord (who, to say truth, had been a little ruffled, and put beside his oratory) in as few, and yet as obliging words as possible, assured them of entire welcome; and, with a graceful turn, singling out poor *Twenty-Ninth of February*, that had sate all this while mumchance at the side-board, begged to couple his health with that of the good company before him—which he drank accordingly; observing that he had not seen his honest face any time these four years—with a number of endearing expressions besides. At the same time removing the solitary *Day* from the forlorn seat which had been assigned him, he stationed him at his own board, somewhere between the *Greek Calends* and *Latter Lammas*.

Ash Wednesday being now called upon for a song, with his eyes fast stuck in his head, and as well as the Canary he had swallowed would give him leave, struck up a Carol, which *Christmas Day* had taught him for the nonce; and was followed by the latter, who gave "Miserere" in fine style, hitting off the mumping notes and lengthened drawl of *Old Mortification* with infinite humour. *April Fool* swore they had exchanged conditions; but *Good Friday* was observed to look extremely grave; and *Sunday* held her fan before her face that she might not be seen to smile.

Shrove-tide, *Lord Mayor's Day*, and *April Fool*, next joined in a glee—

Which is the properest day to drink?

in which all the *Days* chiming in, made a merry burden.

They next fell to quibbles and conundrums. The question being proposed, who had the greatest number of followers—the *Quarter Days* said, there could be no question as to that; for they had all the creditors in the world dogging their heels. But *April Fool* gave it in favour of the *Forty Days before Easter;* because the debtors in all cases outnumbered the creditors, and they kept *Lent* all the year.

All this while *Valentine's Day* kept courting pretty *May*, who sate next him, slipping amorous *billets-doux* under the table, till the *Dog Days* (who are naturally of a warm constitution) began to be jealous, and to bark and rage exceedingly. *April Fool*, who likes a bit of sport above measure, and had some pretensions to the lady besides, as being but a cousin once removed,—clapped and halloo'd them on; and as fast as their indignation cooled, those mad wags, the *Ember Days*, were at it with their bellows, to blow it into a flame; and all was in a ferment, till old Madam *Septuagesima* (who boasts herself the *Mother of the Days*) wisely diverted the conversation with a tedious tale of the lovers which she could reckon when she was young,

and of one Master *Rogation Day* in particular, who was for ever putting the *question* to her; but she kept him at a distance, as the chronicle would tell —by which I apprehend she meant the Almanack. Then she rambled on to the *Days that were gone*, the *good old Days*, and so to the *Days before the Flood*—which plainly showed her old head to be little better than crazed and doited.

Day being ended, the *Days* called for their cloaks and greatcoats, and took their leave. *Lord Mayor's Day* went off in a Mist, as usual; *Shortest Day* in a deep black Fog, that wrapt the little gentleman all round like a hedge-hog. Two *Vigils*—so watchmen are called in heaven—saw *Christmas Day* safe home—they had been used to the business before. Another *Vigil*—a stout, sturdy patrole, called the *Eve of St. Christopher*—seeing *Ash Wednesday* in a condition little better than he should be—e'en whipt him over his shoulders, pick-a-back fashion, and *Old Mortification* went floating home singing—

On the bat's back do I fly,

and a number of old snatches besides, between drunk and sober; but very few Aves or Penitentiaries (you may believe me) were among them. *Longest Day* set off westward in beautiful crimson and gold—the rest, some in one fashion, some in another; but *Valentine* and pretty *May* took their departure together in one of the prettiest silvery twilights a Lover's Day could wish to set in.

OLD CHINA

I HAVE an almost feminine partiality for old china. When I go to see any great house, I inquire for the china-closet, and next for the picture-gallery. I cannot defend the order of preference, but by saying that we have all some taste or other, of too ancient a date to admit of our remembering distinctly that it was an acquired one. I can call to mind the first play, and the first exhibition, that I was taken to; but I am not conscious of a time when china jars and saucers were introduced into my imagination.

I had no repugnance then—why should I now have?—to those little, lawless, azure-tinctured grotesques, that, under the notion of men and women, float about, uncircumscribed by any element, in that world before perspective—a china tea-cup.

I like to see my old friends—whom distance cannot diminish—figuring up in the air (so they appear to our optics), yet on *terra firma* still—for so we must in courtesy interpret that speck of deeper blue, which the decorous artist, to prevent absurdity, had made to spring up beneath their sandals.

I love the men with women's faces, and the women, if possible, with still more womanish expressions.

Here is a young and courtly Mandarin, handing tea to a lady from a salver—two miles off. See how

distance seems to set off respect! And here the same lady, or another—for likeness is identity on teacups—is stepping into a little fairy boat, moored on the hither side of this calm garden river, with a dainty mincing foot, which in a right angle of incidence (as angles go in our world) must infallibly land her in the midst of a flowery mead—a furlong off on the other side of the same strange stream!

Farther on—if far or near can be predicated of their world—see horses, trees, pagodas, dancing the hays.

Here—a cow and rabbit couchant, and coextensive—so objects show, seen through the lucid atmosphere of fine Cathay.

I was pointing out to my cousin last evening, over our Hyson (which we are old-fashioned enough to drink unmixed still of an afternoon), some of these *speciosa miracula* upon a set of extraordinary old blue china (a recent purchase) which we were now for the first time using; and could not help remarking, how favourable circumstances had been to us of late years, that we could afford to please the eye sometimes with trifles of this sort—when a passing sentiment seemed to overshade the brows of my companion. I am quick at detecting these summer clouds in Bridget.

"I wish the good old times would come again," she said, "when we were not quite so rich. I do not mean that I want to be poor; but there was a middle state"—so she was pleased to ramble on,—

"in which I am sure we were a great deal happier. A purchase is but a purchase, now that you have money enough and to spare. Formerly it used to be a triumph. When we coveted a cheap luxury (and, O! how much ado I had to get you to consent in those times!)—we were used to have a debate two or three days before, and to weigh the *for* and *against*, and think what we might spare it out of, and what saving we could hit upon, that should be an equivalent. A thing was worth buying then, when we felt the money that we paid for it.

"Do you remember the brown suit, which you made to hang upon you, till all your friends cried shame upon you, it grew so threadbare—and all because of that folio Beaumont and Fletcher, which you dragged home late at night from Barker's in Covent Garden? Do you remember how we eyed it for weeks before we could make up our minds to the purchase, and had not come to a determination till it was near ten o'clock of the Saturday night, when you set off from Islington, fearing you should be too late—and when the old bookseller with some grumbling opened his shop, and by the twinkling taper (for he was setting bedwards) lighted out the relic from his dusty treasures—and when you lugged it home, wishing it were twice as cumbersome—and when you presented it to me—and when we were exploring the perfectness of it (*collating*, you called it)—and while I was repairing some of the loose leaves with paste, which your impatience would not

suffer to be left till day-break—was there no pleasure in being a poor man? or can those neat black clothes which you wear now, and are so careful to keep brushed, since we have become rich and finical—give you half the honest vanity with which you flaunted it about in that overworn suit—your old corbeau—for four or five weeks longer than you should have done, to pacify your conscience for the mighty sum of fifteen—or sixteen shillings was it?—a great affair we thought it then—which you had lavished on the old folio. Now you can afford to buy any book that pleases you, but I do not see that you ever bring me home any nice old purchases now.

"When you came home with twenty apologies for laying out a less number of shillings upon that print after Lionardo, which we christened the 'Lady Blanch'; when you looked at the purchase, and thought of the money—and thought of the money, and looked again at the picture—was there no pleasure in being a poor man? Now, you have nothing to do but to walk into Colnaghi's, and buy a wilderness of Lionardos. Yet do you?

"Then, do you remember our pleasant walks to Enfield, and Potter's bar, and Waltham, when we had a holyday—holydays, and all other fun, are gone now we are rich—and the little hand-basket in which I used to deposit our day's fare of savoury cold lamb and salad—and how you would pry about at noon-tide for some decent house, where we might

go in and produce our store—only paying for the ale that you must call for—and speculate upon the looks of the landlady, and whether she was likely to allow us a table-cloth—and wish for such another honest hostess as Izaak Walton has described many a one on the pleasant banks of the Lea, when he went a-fishing—and sometimes they would prove obliging enough, and sometimes they would look grudgingly upon us—but we had cheerful looks still for one another, and would eat our plain food savourily, scarcely grudging Piscator his Trout Hall? Now—when we go out a day's pleasuring, which is seldom, moreover, we *ride* part of the way, and go into a fine inn, and order the best of dinners, never debating the expense—which, after all, never has half the relish of those chance country snaps, when we were at the mercy of uncertain usage, and a precarious welcome.

"You are too proud to see a play anywhere now but in the pit. Do you remember where it was we used to sit, when we saw the battle of Hexham, and the surrender of Calais, and Bannister and Mrs. Bland in the Children in the Wood—when we squeezed out our shillings apiece to sit three or four times in a season in the one-shilling gallery—where you felt all the time that you ought not to have brought me—and more strongly I felt obligation to you for having brought me—and the pleasure was the better for a little shame—and when the curtain drew up, what cared we for our

place in the house, or what mattered it where we were sitting, when our thoughts were with Rosalind in Arden, or with Viola at the Court of Illyria? You used to say that the Gallery was the best place of all for enjoying a play socially—that the relish of such exhibitions must be in proportion to the infrequency of going—that the company we met there, not being in general readers of plays, were obliged to attend the more, and did attend, to what was going on, on the stage—because a word lost would have been a chasm, which it was impossible for them to fill up. With such reflections we consoled our pride then—and I appeal to you whether, as a woman, I met generally with less attention and accommodation than I have done since in more expensive situations in the house? The getting in, indeed, and the crowding up those inconvenient staircases, was bad enough—but there was still a law of civility to woman recognized to quite as great an extent as we ever found in the other passages—and how a little difficulty overcome heightened the snug seat and the play, afterwards! Now we can only pay our money and walk in. You cannot see, you say, in the galleries now. I am sure we saw, and heard too, well enough then—but sight, and all, I think, is gone with our poverty.

"There was pleasure in eating strawberries, before they became quite common—in the first dish of peas, while they were yet dear—to have them for a nice supper, a treat. What treat can we have

now? If we were to treat ourselves now—that is, to have dainties a little above our means, it would be selfish and wicked. It is the very little more that we allow ourselves beyond what the actual poor can get at, that makes what I call a treat—when two people, living together as we have done, now and then indulge themselves in a cheap luxury, which both like; while each apologizes, and is willing to take both halves of the blame to his single share. I see no harm in people making much of themselves, in that sense of the word. It may give them a hint how to make much of others. But now—what I mean by the word—we never *do* make much of ourselves. None but the poor can do it. I do not mean the veriest poor of all, but persons as we were, just above poverty.

"I know what you were going to say, that it is mighty pleasant at the end of the year to make all meet,—and much ado we used to have every Thirty-first Night of December to account for our exceedings—many a long face did you make over your puzzled accounts, and in contriving to make it out how we had spent so much—or that we had not spent so much—or that it was impossible we should spend so much next year—and still we found our slender capital decreasing—but then,—betwixt ways, and projects, and compromises of one sort or another, and talk of curtailing this charge, and doing without that for the future—and the hope that youth brings, and laughing spirits (in which

you were never poor till now), we pocketed up our loss, and in conclusion, with 'lusty brimmers' (as you used to quote it out of *hearty cheerful Mr. Cotton*, as you called him), we used to welcome in the 'coming guest.' Now we have no reckoning at all at the end of the old year—no flattering promises about the new year doing better for us."

Bridget is so sparing of her speech on most occasions, that when she gets into a rhetorical vein, I am careful how I interrupt it. I could not help, however, smiling at the phantom of wealth which her dear imagination had conjured up out of a clear income of poor —— hundred pounds a year. "It is true we were happier when we were poorer, but we were also younger, my cousin. I am afraid we must put up with the excess, for if we were to shake the superflux into the sea, we should not much mend ourselves. That we had much to struggle with, as we grew up together, we have reason to be most thankful. It strengthened and knit our compact closer. We could never have been what we have been to each other, if we had always had the sufficiency which you now complain of. The resisting power—those natural dilations of the youthful spirit, which circumstances cannot straiten—with us are long since passed away. Competence to age is supplementary youth, a sorry supplement indeed, but I fear the best that is to be had. We must ride where we formerly walked: live better and lie softer —and shall be wise to do so—than we had means to

do in those good old days you speak of. Yet could those days return—could you and I once more walk our thirty miles a day—could Bannister and Mrs. Bland again be young, and you and I be young to see them—could the good old one-shilling gallery days return—they are dreams, my cousin, now—but could you and I at this moment, instead of this quiet argument, by our well-carpeted fireside, sitting on this luxurious sofa—be once more struggling up those inconvenient staircases, pushed about and squeezed, and elbowed by the poorest rabble of poor gallery scramblers—could I once more hear those anxious shrieks of yours—and the delicious *Thank God, we are safe*, which always followed when the topmost stair, conquered, let in the first light of the whole cheerful theatre down beneath us—I know not the fathom line that ever touched a descent so deep as I would be willing to bury more wealth in than Crœsus had, or the great Jew R—— is supposed to have, to purchase it. And now do just look at that merry little Chinese waiter holding an umbrella, big enough for a bed-tester, over the head of that pretty insipid half Madonna-ish chit of a lady in that very blue summer-house."

THE CHILD ANGEL; A DREAM

I CHANCED upon the prettiest, oddest, fantastical thing of a dream the other night, that you shall hear of. I had been reading the "Loves of the Angels," and went to bed with my head full of speculations, suggested by that extraordinary legend. It had given birth to innumerable conjectures; and, I remember the last waking thought, which I gave expression to on my pillow, was a sort of wonder, "what could come of it."

I was suddenly transported, how or whither I could scarcely make out—but to some celestial region. It was not the real heavens neither—not the downright Bible heaven—but a kind of fairy-land heaven, about which a poor human fancy may have leave to sport and air itself, I will hope, without presumption.

Methought—what wild things dreams are!—I was present—at what would you imagine?—at an angel's gossiping.

Whence it came, or how it came, or who bid it come, or whether it came purely of its own head, neither you nor I know—but there lay, sure enough, wrapt in its little cloudy swaddling-bands—a Child Angel.

Sun-threads—filmy beams—ran through the celestial napery of what seemed its princely cradle. All the winged orders hovered round, watching

when the new born should open its yet closed eyes; which, when it did, first one, and then the other—with a solicitude and apprehension, yet not such as, stained with fear, dim the expanding eyelids of mortal infants, but as if to explore its path in those its unhereditary palaces—what an inextinguishable titter that time spared not celestial visages! Nor wanted there to my seeming—O, the inexplicable simpleness of dreams!—bowls of that cheering nectar,

> —which mortals *caudle* call below.

Nor were wanting faces of female ministrants,—stricken in years, as it might seem,—so dexterous were those heavenly attendants to counterfeit kindly similitudes of earth, to greet with terrestrial childrites the young *present*, which earth had made to heaven.

Then were celestial harpings heard, not in full symphony, as those by which the spheres are tutored; but, as loudest instruments on earth speak oftentimes, muffled; so to accommodate their sound the better to the weak ears of the imperfect-born. And, with the noise of these subdued soundings, the Angelet sprang forth, fluttering its rudiments of pinions—but forthwith flagged and was recovered into the arms of those full-winged angels. And a wonder it was to see how, as years went round in heaven—a year in dreams is as a day—continually its white shoulders put forth buds of wings, but

wanting the perfect angelic nutriment, anon was shorn of its aspiring, and fell fluttering—still caught by angel hands, for ever to put forth shoots, and to fall fluttering, because its birth was not of the unmixed vigour of heaven.

And a name was given to the Babe Angel, and it was to be called *Ge-Urania*, because its production was of earth and heaven.

And it could not taste of death, by reason of its adoption into immortal palaces; but it was to know weakness, and reliance, and the shadow of human imbecility; and it went with a lame gait; but in its goings it exceeded all mortal children in grace and swiftness. Then pity first sprang up in angelic bosoms; and yearnings (like the human) touched them at the sight of the immortal lame one.

And with pain did then first those Intuitive Essences, with pain and strife to their natures (not grief), put back their bright intelligences, and reduce their ethereal minds, schooling them to degrees and slower processes, so to adapt their lessons to the gradual illumination (as must needs be) of the half-earth-born; and what intuitive notices they could not repel (by reason that their nature is, to know all things at once) the half-heavenly novice, by the better part of its nature, aspired to receive into its understanding; so that Humility and Aspiration went on even-paced in the instruction of the glorious Amphibium.

But, by reason that Mature Humanity is too

gross to breathe the air of that super-subtile region, its portion was, and is, to be a child for ever.

And because the human part of it might not press into the heart and inwards of the palace of its adoption, those full-natured angels tended it by turns in the purlieus of the palace, where were shady groves and rivulets, like this green earth from which it came; so Love, with Voluntary Humility, waited upon the entertainment of the new-adopted.

And myriads of years rolled round (in dreams Time is nothing), and still it kept, and is to keep, perpetual childhood, and is the Tutelar Genius of Childhood upon earth, and still goes lame and lovely.

By the banks of the river Pison is seen, lone sitting by the grave of the terrestrial Adah, whom the angel Nadir loved, a Child; but not the same which I saw in heaven. A mournful hue overcasts its lineaments; nevertheless, a correspondency is between the child by the grave, and that celestial orphan, whom I saw above; and the dimness of the grief upon the heavenly, is a shadow or emblem of that which stains the beauty of the terrestrial. And this correspondency is not to be understood but by dreams.

And in the archives of heaven I had grace to read, how that once the angel Nadir, being exiled from his place for mortal passion, upspringing on the wings of parental love (such power had parental love for a moment to suspend the else-irrevocable law) appeared for a brief instant in his station, and,

depositing a wondrous Birth, straightway disappeared, and the palaces knew him no more. And this charge was the self-same Babe, who goeth lame and lovely—but Adah sleepeth by the river Pison.

CONFESSIONS OF A DRUNKARD

DEHORTATIONS from the use of strong liquors have been the favourite topic of sober declaimers in all ages, and have been received with abundance of applause by water-drinking critics. But with the patient himself, the man that is to be cured, unfortunately their sound has seldom prevailed. Yet the evil is acknowledged, the remedy simple. Abstain. No force can oblige a man to raise the glass to his head against his will. 'T is as easy as not to steal, not to tell lies.

Alas! the hand to pilfer, and the tongue to bear false witness, have no constitutional tendency. These are actions indifferent to them. At the first instance of the reformed will, they can be brought off without a murmur. The itching finger is but a figure in speech, and the tongue of the liar can with the same natural delight give forth useful truths with which it has been accustomed to scatter their pernicious contraries. But when a man has commenced sot——

O pause, thou sturdy moralist, thou person of stout nerves and a strong head, whose liver is happily untouched, and ere thy gorge riseth at the *name* which I had written, first learn what the *thing* is; how much of compassion, how much of human allowance, thou mayest virtuously mingle with thy disapprobation. Trample not on the ruins of a man. Exact not, under so terrible a penalty as infamy, a

resuscitation from a state of death almost as real as that from which Lazarus rose not but by a miracle.

Begin a reformation, and custom will make it easy. But what if the beginning be dreadful, the first steps not like climbing a mountain but going through fire? what if the whole system must undergo a change violent as that which we conceive of the mutation of form in some insects? what if a process comparable to flaying alive be to be gone through? is the weakness that sinks under such struggles to be confounded with the pertinacity which clings to other vices, which have induced no constitutional necessity, no engagement of the whole victim, body and soul?

I have known one in that state, when he has tried to abstain but for one evening,—though the poisonous potion had long ceased to bring back its first enchantments, though he was sure it would rather deepen his gloom than brighten it,—in the violence of the struggle, and the necessity he had felt of getting rid of the present sensation at any rate, I have known him to scream out, to cry aloud, for the anguish and pain of the strife within him.

Why should I hesitate to declare, that the man of whom I speak is myself? I have no puling apology to make to mankind. I see them all in one way or another deviating from the pure reason. It is to my own nature alone I am accountable for the woe that I have brought upon it.

I believe that there are constitutions, robust heads

and iron insides, whom scarce any excesses can hurt; whom brandy (I have seen them drink it like wine), at all events whom wine, taken in ever so plentiful a measure, can do no worse injury to than just to muddle their faculties, perhaps never very pellucid. On them this discourse is wasted. They would but laugh at a weak brother, who, trying his strength with them, and coming off foiled from the contest, would fain persuade them that such agonistic exercises are dangerous. It is to a very different description of persons I speak. It is to the weak—the nervous; to those who feel the want of some artificial aid to raise their spirits in society to what is no more than the ordinary pitch of all around them without it. This is the secret of our drinking. Such must fly the convivial board in the first instance, if they do not mean to sell themselves for term of life.

Twelve years ago I had completed my six-and-twentieth year. I had lived from the period of leaving school to that time pretty much in solitude. My companions were chiefly books, or at most one or two living ones of my own book-loving and sober stamp. I rose early, went to bed betimes, and the faculties which God had given me, I have reason to think, did not rust in me unused.

About that time I fell in with some companions of a different order. They were men of boisterous spirits, sitters up a-nights, disputants, drunken; yet seemed to have something noble about them. We dealt about the wit, or what passes for it after mid-

night, jovially. Of the quality called fancy I certainly possessed a larger share than my companions. Encouraged by their applause, I set up for a professed joker! I, who of all men am least fitted for such an occupation, having, in addition to the greatest difficulty which I experience at all times of finding words to express my meaning, a natural nervous impediment in my speech!

Reader, if you are gifted with nerves like mine, aspire to any character but that of a wit. When you find a tickling relish upon your tongue disposing you to that sort of conversation, especially if you find a preternatural flow of ideas setting in upon you at the sight of a bottle and fresh glasses, avoid giving way to it as you would fly your greatest destruction. If you cannot crush the power of fancy, or that within you which you mistake for such, divert it, give it some other play. Write an essay, pen a character or description,—but not as I do now, with tears trickling down your cheeks.

To be an object of compassion to friends, of derision to foes; to be suspected by strangers, stared at by fools; to be esteemed dull when you cannot be witty, to be applauded for witty when you know that you have been dull; to be called upon for the extemporaneous exercise of that faculty which no premeditation can give; to be spurred on to efforts which end in contempt; to be set on to provoke mirth which procures the procurer hatred; to give pleasure and be paid with squinting malice; to swal-

low draughts of life-destroying wine which are to be distilled into airy breath to tickle vain auditors; to mortgage miserable morrows for nights of madness; to waste whole seas of time upon those who pay it back in little inconsiderable drops of grudging applause,—are the wages of buffoonery and death.

Time, which has a sure stroke at dissolving all connections which have no solider fastening than this liquid cement, more kind to me than my own taste or penetration, at length opened my eyes to the supposed qualities of my first friends. No trace of them is left but in the vices which they introduced, and the habits they infixed. In them my friends survive still, and exercise ample retribution for any supposed infidelity that I may have been guilty of towards them. .

My next more immediate companions were and are persons of such intrinsic and felt worth, that though accidentally their acquaintance has proved pernicious to me, I do not know that if the thing were to do over again, I should have the courage to eschew the mischief at the price of forfeiting the benefit. I came to them reeking from the steams of my late over-heated notions of companionship; and the slightest fuel which they unconsciously afforded, was sufficient to feed my own fires into a propensity.

They were no drinkers; but, one from professional habits, and another from a custom derived from his father, smoked tobacco. The devil could

not have devised a more subtle trap to re-take a backsliding penitent. The transition, from gulping down draughts of liquid fire to puffing out innocuous blasts of dry smoke, was so like cheating him. But he is too hard for us when we hope to commute. He beats us at barter; and when we think to set off a new failing against an old infirmity, 't is odds but he puts the trick upon us of two for one. That (comparatively) white devil of tobacco brought with him in the end seven worse than himself.

It were impertinent to carry the reader through all the processes by which, from smoking at first with malt liquor, I took my degrees through thin wines, through stronger wine and water, through small punch, to those juggling compositions, which, under the name of mixed liquors, slur a great deal of brandy or other poison under less and less water continually, until they come next to none, and so to none at all. But it is hateful to disclose the secrets of my Tartarus.

I should repel my readers, from a mere incapacity of believing me, were I to tell them what tobacco has been to me, the drudging service which I have paid, the slavery which I have vowed to it. How, when I have resolved to quit it, a feeling as of ingratitude has started up; how it has put on personal claims and made the demands of a friend upon me. How the reading of it casually in a book, as where Adams takes his whiff in the chimney-corner of some inn in Joseph Andrews, or Piscator in the

Complete Angler breaks his fast upon a morning pipe in that delicate room *Piscatoribus Sacrum*, has in a moment broken down the resistance of weeks. How a pipe was ever in my midnight path before me, till the vision forced me to realise it,—how then its ascending vapours curled, its fragrance lulled, and the thousand delicious ministerings conversant about it, employing every faculty, extracted the sense of pain. How from illuminating it came to darken, from a quick solace it turned to a negative relief, thence to a restlessness and dissatisfaction, thence to a positive misery. How, even now, when the whole secret stands confessed in all its dreadful truth before me, I feel myself linked to it beyond the power of revocation. Bone of my bone ——

Persons not accustomed to examine the motives of their actions, to reckon up the countless nails that rivet the chains of habit, or perhaps being bound by none so obdurate as those I have confessed to, may recoil from this as from an overcharged picture. But what short of such a bondage is it, which in spite of protesting friends, a weeping wife, and a reprobating world, chains down many a poor fellow, of no original indisposition to goodness, to his pipe and his pot?

I have seen a print after Correggio, in which three female figures are ministering to a man who sits fast bound at the root of a tree. Sensuality is soothing him, Evil Habit is nailing him to a branch, and Repugnance at the same instant of time is

applying a snake to his side. In his face is feeble delight, the recollection of past rather than perception of present pleasures, languid enjoyment of evil with utter imbecility to good, a Sybaritic effeminacy, a submission to bondage, the springs of the will gone down like a broken clock, the sin and the suffering co-instantaneous, or the latter forerunning the former, remorse preceding action—all this represented in one point of time.—When I saw this, I admired the wonderful skill of the painter. But when I went away, I wept, because I thought of my own condition.

Of *that* there is no hope that it should ever change. The waters have gone over me. But out of the black depths, could I be heard, I would cry out to all those who have but set a foot in the perilous flood. Could the youth, to whom the flavour of his first wine is delicious as the opening scenes of life or the entering upon some newly-discovered paradise, look into my desolation, and be made to understand what a dreary thing it is when a man shall feel himself going down a precipice with open eyes and a passive will,—to see his destruction and have no power to stop it, and yet to feel it all the way emanating from himself; to perceive all goodness emptied out of him, and yet not to be able to forget a time when it was otherwise; to bear about the piteous spectacle of his own self-ruins:—could he see my fevered eye, feverish with last night's drinking, and feverishly looking for this

night's repetition of the folly; could he feel the body of the death out of which I cry hourly with feebler and feebler outcry to be delivered,—it were enough to make him dash the sparkling beverage to the earth in all the pride of its mantling temptation; to make him clasp his teeth,

> and not undo 'em
> To suffer WET DAMNATION to run thro' 'em.

Yea, but (methinks I hear somebody object) if sobriety be that fine thing you would have us to understand, if the comforts of a cool brain are to be preferred to that state of heated excitement which you describe and deplore, what hinders in your instance that you do not return to those habits from which you would induce others never to swerve? if the blessing be worth preserving, is it not worth recovering?

Recovering!—O if a wish could transport me back to those days of youth, when a draught from the next clear spring could slake any heats which summer suns and youthful exercise had power to stir up in the blood, how gladly would I return to thee, pure element, the drink of children and of child-like holy hermit! In my dreams I can sometimes fancy thy cool refreshment purling over my burning tongue. But my waking stomach rejects it. That which refreshes innocence only makes me sick and faint.

But is there no middle way betwixt total abstinence and the excess which kills you?—For your

sake, reader, and that you may never attain to my experience, with pain I must utter the dreadful truth, that there is none, none that I can find. In my stage of habit (I speak not of habits less confirmed—for some of them I believe the advice to be most prudential), in the stage which I have reached, to stop short of that measure which is sufficient to draw on torpor and sleep, the benumbing apoplectic sleep of the drunkard, is to have taken none at all. The pain of the self-denial is all one. And what that is, I had rather the reader should believe on my credit, than know from his own trial. He will come to know it, whenever he shall arrive in that state in which, paradoxical as it may appear, *reason shall only visit him through intoxication;* for it is a fearful truth, that the intellectual faculties by repeated acts of intemperance may be driven from their orderly sphere of action, their clear daylight ministeries, until they shall be brought at last to depend, for the faint manifestation of their departing energies, upon the returning periods of the fatal madness to which they owe their devastation. The drinking man is never less himself than during his sober intervals. Evil is so far his good.[1]

[1] When poor M—— painted his last picture, with a pencil in one trembling hand, and a glass of brandy and water in the other, his fingers owed the comparative steadiness with which they were enabled to go through their task in an imperfect manner, to a temporary firmness derived from a repetition of practices, the general effect of which had shaken both them and him so terribly.

Behold me then, in the robust period of life, reduced to imbecility and decay. Hear me count my gains, and the profits which I have derived from the midnight cup.

Twelve years ago, I was possessed of a healthy frame of mind and body. I was never strong, but I think my constitution (for a weak one) was as happily exempt from the tendency to any malady as it was possible to be. I scarce knew what it was to ail anything. Now, except when I am losing myself in a sea of drink, I am never free from those uneasy sensations in head and stomach, which are so much worse to bear than any definite pains or aches.

At that time I was seldom in bed after six in the morning, summer and winter. I awoke refreshed, and seldom without some merry thoughts in my head, or some piece of a song to welcome the newborn day. Now, the first feeling which besets me, after stretching out the hours of recumbence to their last possible extent, is a forecast of the wearisome day that lies before me, with a secret wish that I could have lain on still, or never awaked.

Life itself, my waking life, has much of the confusion, the trouble, and obscure perplexity, of an ill dream. In the day-time I stumble upon dark mountains.

Business, which, though never very particularly adapted to my nature, yet as something of necessity to be gone through, and therefore best undertaken with cheerfulness, I used to enter upon with some

degree of alacrity, now wearies, affrights, perplexes me. I fancy all sorts of discouragements, and am ready to give up an occupation which gives me bread, from a harassing conceit of incapacity. The slightest commission given me by a friend, or any small duty which I have to perform for myself, as giving orders to a tradesman, etc., haunts me as a labour impossible to be got through. So much the springs of action are broken.

The same cowardice attends me in all my intercourse with mankind. I dare not promise that a friend's honour, or his cause, would be safe in my keeping, if I were put to the expense of any manly resolution in defending it. So much the springs of moral action are deadened within me.

My favourite occupations in times past now cease to entertain. I can do nothing readily. Application for ever so short a time kills me. This poor abstract of my condition was penned at long intervals, with scarcely an attempt at connection of thought, which is now difficult to me.

The noble passages which formerly delighted me in history or poetic fiction, now only draw a few tears, allied to dotage. My broken and dispirited nature seems to sink before anything great and admirable.

I perpetually catch myself in tears, for any cause, or none. It is inexpressible how much this infirmity adds to a sense of shame, and a general feeling of deterioration.

These are some of the instances, concerning which I can say with truth, that it was not always so with me.

Shall I lift up the veil of my weakness any further?—or is this disclosure sufficient?

I am a poor nameless egotist, who have no vanity to consult by these Confessions. I know not whether I shall be laughed at, or heard seriously. Such as they are, I commend them to the reader's attention, if he find his own case any way touched. I have told him what I am come to. Let him stop in time.

POPULAR FALLACIES

I

THAT A BULLY IS ALWAYS A COWARD

THIS axiom contains a principle of compensation, which disposes us to admit the truth of it. But there is no safe trusting to dictionaries and definitions. We should more willingly fall in with this popular language, if we did not find *brutality* sometimes awkwardly coupled with *valour* in the same vocabulary. The comic writers, with their poetical justice, have contributed not a little to mislead us upon this point. To see a hectoring fellow exposed and beaten upon the stage, has something in it wonderfully diverting. Some people's share of animal spirits is notoriously low and defective. It has not strength to raise a vapour, or furnish out the wind of a tolerable bluster. These love to be told that huffing is no part of valour. The truest courage with them is that which is the least noisy and obtrusive. But confront one of these silent heroes with the swaggerer of real life, and his confidence in the theory quickly vanishes. Pretensions do not uniformly bespeak non-performance. A modest, inoffensive deportment does not necessarily imply valour; neither does the absence of it justify us in denying that quality. Hickman wanted modesty—we do not mean *him* of Clarissa—but who ever

doubted his courage? Even the poets — upon whom this equitable distribution of qualities should be most binding — have thought it agreeable to nature to depart from the rule upon occasion Harapha, in the "Agonistes," is indeed a bully upon the received notions. Milton has made him at once a blusterer, a giant, and a dastard. But Almanzor, in Dryden, talks of driving armies singly before him — and does it. Tom Brown had a shrewder insight into this kind of character than either of his predecessors. He divides the palm more equably, and allows his hero a sort of dimidiate pre-eminence: — "Bully Dawson kicked by half the town, and half the town kicked by Bully Dawson." This was true distributive justice.

II

THAT ILL-GOTTEN GAIN NEVER PROSPERS

The weakest part of mankind have this saying commonest in their mouth. It is the trite consolation administered to the easy dupe, when he has been tricked out of his money or estate, that the acquisition of it will do the owner *no good.* But the rogues of this world — the prudenter part of them at least, — know better; and if the observation had been as true as it is old, would not have failed by this time to have discovered it. They have pretty sharp distinctions of the fluctuating and the permanent. "Lightly come, lightly go," is a proverb

which they can very well afford to leave, when they leave little else, to the losers. They do not always find manors, got by rapine or chicanery, insensibly to melt away as the poets will have it; or that all gold glides, like thawing snow, from the thief's hand that grasps it. Church land, alienated to lay uses, was formerly denounced to have this slippery quality. But some portions of it somehow always stuck so fast, that the denunciators have been fain to postpone the prophecy of refundment to a late posterity.

III

THAT A MAN MUST NOT LAUGH AT HIS OWN JEST

The severest exaction surely ever invented upon the self-denial of poor human nature! This is to expect a gentleman to give a treat without partaking of it; to sit esurient at his own table, and commend the flavour of his venison upon the absurd strength of his never touching it himself. On the contrary, we love to see a wag *taste* his own joke to his party; to watch a quirk or a merry conceit flickering upon the lips some seconds before the tongue is delivered of it. If it be good, fresh, and racy—begotten of the occasion; if he that utters it never thought it before, he is naturally the first to be tickled with it, and any suppression of such complacence we hold to be churlish and insulting. What does it seem to imply but that your company is

weak or foolish enough to be moved by an image or a fancy, that shall stir you not at all, or but faintly? This is exactly the humour of the fine gentleman in Mandeville, who, while he dazzles his guests with the display of some costly toy, affects himself to "see nothing considerable in it."

IV

THAT SUCH A ONE SHOWS HIS BREEDING.—THAT IT IS EASY TO PERCEIVE HE IS NO GENTLEMAN

A SPEECH from the poorer sort of people, which always indicates that the party vituperated is a gentleman. The very fact which they deny, is that which galls and exasperates them to use this language. The forbearance with which it is usually received is a proof what interpretation the bystander sets upon it. Of a kin to this, and still less politic, are the phrases with which, in their street rhetoric, they ply one another more grossly;—*He is a poor creature.*—*He has not a rag to cover* —— *etc.;* though this last, we confess, is more frequently applied by females to females. They do not perceive that the satire glances upon themselves. A poor man, of all things in the world, should not upbraid an antagonist with poverty. Are there no other topics—as, to tell him his father was hanged—his sister, etc.——without exposing a secret which should be kept snug between them; and doing an affront to the order to which they have the honour equally

to belong? All this while they do not see how the wealthier man stands by and laughs in his sleeve at both.

V

THAT THE POOR COPY THE VICES OF THE RICH

A SMOOTH text to the latter; and, preached from the pulpit, is sure of a docile audience from the pews lined with satin. It is twice sitting upon velvet to a foolish squire to be told that *he*—and not *perverse nature*, as the homilies would make us imagine, is the true cause of all the irregularities in his parish. This is striking at the root of free-will indeed, and denying the originality of sin in any sense. But men are not such implicit sheep as this comes to. If the abstinence from evil on the part of the upper classes is to derive itself from no higher principle than the apprehension of setting ill patterns to the lower, we beg leave to discharge them from all squeamishness on that score: they may even take their fill of pleasures, where they can find them. The Genius of Poverty, hampered and straitened as it is, is not so barren of invention but it can trade upon the staple of its own vice, without drawing upon their capital. The poor are not quite such servile imitators as they take them for. Some of them are very clever artists in their way. Here and there, we find an original. Who taught the poor to steal—to pilfer? They did not go to the

great for schoolmasters in these faculties, surely. It is well if in some vices they allow us to be—no copyists. In no other sense is it true that the poor copy them, than as servants may be said to *take after* their masters and mistresses, when they succeed to their reversionary cold meats. If the master, from indisposition, or some other cause, neglect his food, the servant dines notwithstanding.

"O, but (some will say) the force of example is great." We knew a lady who was so scrupulous on this head, that she would put up with the calls of the most impertinent visitor, rather than let her servant say she was not at home, for fear of teaching her maid to tell an untruth; and this in the very face of the fact, which she knew well enough, that the wench was one of the greatest liars upon the earth without teaching; so much so, that her mistress possibly never heard two words of consecutive truth from her in her life. But nature must go for nothing; example must be everything. This liar in grain, who never opened her mouth without a lie, must be guarded against a remote inference, which she (pretty casuist!) might possibly draw from a form of words—literally false, but essentially deceiving no one—that under some circumstances a fib might not be so exceedingly sinful—a fiction, too, not at all in her own way, or one that she could be suspected of adopting, for few servant-wenches care to be denied to visitors.

This word *example* reminds us of another fine

word which is in use upon these occasions—*encouragement.* "People in our sphere must not be thought to give encouragement to such proceedings." To such a frantic height is this principle capable of being carried, that we have known individuals who have thought it within the scope of their influence to sanction despair, and give *éclat* to —suicide. A domestic in the family of a county member lately deceased, from love, or some unknown cause, cut his throat, but not successfully. The poor fellow was otherwise much loved and respected; and great interest was used in his behalf, upon his recovery, that he might be permitted to retain his place; his word being first pledged, not without some substantial sponsors to promise for him, that the like should never happen again. His master was inclinable to keep him, but his mistress thought otherwise; and John in the end was dismissed, her ladyship declaring that she "could not think of encouraging any such doings in the county."

VI

THAT ENOUGH IS AS GOOD AS A FEAST

Not a man, woman, or child, in ten miles round Guildhall, who really believes this saying. The inventor of it did not believe it himself. It was made in revenge by somebody, who was disappointed of a regale. It is a vile cold-scrag-of-mutton sophism;

a lie palmed upon the palate, which knows better things. If nothing else could be said for a feast, this is sufficient—that from the superflux there is usually something left for the next day. Morally interpreted, it belongs to a class of proverbs which have a tendency to make us undervalue *money*. Of this cast are those notable observations, that money is not health; riches cannot purchase everything: the metaphor which makes gold to be mere muck, with the morality which traces fine clothing to the sheep's back, and denounces pearl as the unhandsome excretion of an oyster. Hence, too, the phrase which imputes dirt to acres—a sophistry so barefaced, that even the literal sense of it is true only in a wet season. This, and abundance of similar sage saws assuming to inculcate *content*, we verily believe to have been the invention of some cunning borrower, who had designs upon the purse of his wealthier neighbour, which he could only hope to carry by force of these verbal jugglings. Translate any one of these sayings out of the artful metonymy which envelopes it, and the trick is apparent. Goodly legs and shoulders of mutton, exhilarating cordials, books, pictures, the opportunities of seeing foreign countries, independence, heart's ease, a man's own time to himself, are not *muck*—however we may be pleased to scandalise with that appellation the faithful metal that provides them for us.

VII

OF TWO DISPUTANTS, THE WARMEST IS GENERALLY IN THE WRONG

Our experience would lead us to quite an opposite conclusion. Temper indeed, is no test of truth; but warmth and earnestness are a proof at least of a man's own conviction of the rectitude of that which he maintains. Coolness is as often the result of an unprincipled indifference to truth or falsehood, as of a sober confidence in a man's own side in a dispute. Nothing is more insulting sometimes than the appearance of this philosophic temper. There is little Titubus, the stammering law-stationer in Lincoln's Inn—we have seldom known this shrewd little fellow engaged in an argument where we were not convinced he had the best of it, if his tongue would but fairly have seconded him. When he has been spluttering excellent broken sense for an hour together, writhing and labouring to be delivered of the point of dispute—the very gist of the controversy knocking at his teeth, which like some obstinate iron-grating still obstructed its deliverance—his puny frame convulsed, and face reddening all over at an unfairness in the logic which he wanted articulation to expose, it has moved our gall to see a smooth portly fellow of an adversary, that cared not a button for the merits of the question, by merely laying his hand upon the head of the sta-

tioner, and desiring him to be *calm* (your tall disputants have always the advantage), with a provoking sneer carry the argument clean from him in the opinion of all the bystanders, who have gone away clearly convinced that Titubus must have been in the wrong, because he was in a passion; and that Mr. ——, meaning his opponent, is one of the fairest and at the same time one of the most dispassionate arguers breathing.

VIII

THAT VERBAL ALLUSIONS ARE NOT WIT, BECAUSE THEY WILL NOT BEAR A TRANSLATION

The same might be said of the wittiest local allusions. A custom is sometimes as difficult to explain to a foreigner as a pun. What would become of a great part of the wit of the last age, if it were tried by this test? How would certain topics, as aldermanity, cuckoldry, have sounded to a Terentian auditory, though Terence himself had been alive to translate them? *Senator urbanus* with *Curruca* to boot for a synonym, would but faintly have done the business. Words, involving notions, are hard enough to render; it is too much to expect us to translate a sound, and give an elegant version to a jingle. The Virgilian harmony is not translatable, but by substituting harmonious sounds in another language for it. To Latinise a pun, we must seek a pun in Latin that will answer to it; as, to give an

idea of the double endings in Hudibras, we must have recourse to a similar practice in old monkish doggrel. Dennis, the fiercest oppugner of puns in ancient or modern times, professes himself highly tickled with the "a stick," chiming to "ecclesiastic." Yet what is this but a species of pun, a verbal consonance?

IX

THAT THE WORST PUNS ARE THE BEST

If by worst be only meant the most far-fetched and startling, we agree to it. A pun is not bound by the laws which limit nicer wit. It is a pistol let off at the ear; not a feather to tickle the intellect. It is an antic which does not stand upon manners, but comes bounding into the presence, and does not show the less comic for being dragged in sometimes by the head and shoulders. What though it limp a little, or prove defective in one leg?—all the better. A pun may easily be too curious and artificial. Who has not at one time or other been at a party of professors (himself perhaps an old offender in that line), where, after ringing a round of the most ingenious conceits, every man contributing his shot, and some there the most expert shooters of the day; after making a poor *word* run the gauntlet till it is ready to drop; after hunting and winding it through all the possible ambages of similar sounds; after squeezing, and hauling, and tugging at it, till

the very milk of it will not yield a drop further,—suddenly some obscure, unthought-of fellow in a corner, who was never 'prentice to the trade, whom the company for very pity passed over, as we do by a known poor man when a money-subscription is going round, no one calling upon him for his quota —has all at once come out with something so whimsical, yet so pertinent; so brazen in its pretensions, yet so impossible to be denied; so exquisitely good, and so deplorably bad, at the same time,—that it has proved a Robin Hood's shot; anything ulterior to that is despaired of; and the party breaks up, unanimously voting it to be the very worst (that is, best) pun of the evening. This species of wit is the better for not being perfect in all its parts. What it gains in completeness, it loses in naturalness. The more exactly it satisfies the critical, the less hold it has upon some other faculties. The puns which are most entertaining are those which will least bear an analysis. Of this kind is the following, recorded with a sort of stigma, in one of Swift's Miscellanies.

An Oxford scholar, meeting a porter who was carrying a hare through the streets, accosts him with this extraordinary question: "Prithee, friend, is that thy own hair or a wig?"

There is no excusing this, and no resisting it. A man might blur ten sides of paper in attempting a defence of it against a critic who should be laughter-proof. The quibble in itself is not considerable. It is

only a new turn given by a little false pronunciation to a very common though not very courteous inquiry. Put by one gentleman to another at a dinner-party, it would have been vapid; to the mistress of the house, it would have shown much less wit than rudeness. We must take in the totality of time, place, and person; the pert look of the inquiring scholar, the desponding looks of the puzzled porter: the one stopping at leisure, the other hurrying on with his burden; the innocent though rather abrupt tendency of the first member of the question, with the utter and inextricable irrelevancy of the second; the place—a public street, not favourable to frivolous investigations; the affrontive quality of the primitive inquiry (the common question) invidiously transferred to the derivative (the new turn given to it) in the implied satire; namely, that few of that tribe are expected to eat of the good things which they carry, they being in most countries considered rather as the temporary trustees than owners of such dainties,—which the fellow was beginning to understand; but then the *wig* again comes in, and he can make nothing of it; all put together constitute a picture: Hogarth could have made it intelligible on canvas.

Yet nine out of ten critics will pronounce this a very bad pun, because of the defectiveness in the concluding member, which is its very beauty, and constitutes the surprise. The same person shall cry up for admirable the cold quibble from Virgil about

the broken Cremona;[1] because it is made out in all its parts, and leaves nothing to the imagination. We venture to call it cold; because, of thousands who have admired it, it would be difficult to find one who has heartily chuckled at it. As appealing to the judgment merely (setting the risible faculty aside), we must pronounce it a monument of curious felicity. But as some stories are said to be too good to be true, it may with equal truth be asserted of this biverbal allusion, that it is too good to be natural. One cannot help suspecting that the incident was invented to fit the line. It would have been better had it been less perfect. Like some Virgilian hemistichs, it has suffered by filling up. The *nimium Vicina* was enough in conscience; the *Cremonæ* afterwards loads it. It is, in fact, a double pun; and we have always observed that a superfœtation in this sort of wit is dangerous. When a man has said a good thing, it is seldom politic to follow it up. We do not care to be cheated a second time; or, perhaps the mind of man (with reverence be it spoken) is not capacious enough to lodge two puns at a time. The impression, to be forcible, must be simultaneous and undivided.

[1] Swift.

X

THAT HANDSOME IS THAT HANDSOME DOES

THOSE who use this proverb can never have seen Mrs. Conrady.

The soul, if we may believe Plotinus, is a ray from the celestial beauty. As she partakes more or less of this heavenly light, she informs, with corresponding characters, the fleshly tenement which she chooses, and frames to herself a suitable mansion.

All which only proves that the soul of Mrs. Conrady, in her pre-existent state, was no great judge of architecture.

To the same effect, in a Hymn in honour of Beauty, divine Spenser *platonising* sings:—

> —Every spirit as it is more pure,
> And hath in it the more of heavenly light,
> So it the fairer body doth procure
> To habit in, and it more fairly dight
> With cheerful grace and amiable sight.
> For of the soul the body form doth take:
> For soul is form, and doth the body make.

But Spenser, it is clear, never saw Mrs. Conrady.

These poets, we find, are no safe guides in philosophy; for here, in his very next stanza but one, is a saving clause, which throws us all out again, and leaves us as much to seek as ever:—

> Yet oft it falls, that many a gentle mind
> Dwells in deformed tabernacle drown'd,

> Either by chance, against the course of kind,
> Or through unaptness in the substance found,
> Which it assumed of some stubborn ground,
> That will not yield unto her form's direction,
> But is performed with some foul imperfection.

From which it would follow, that Spenser had seen somebody like Mrs. Conrady.

The spirit of this good lady—her previous *anima*—must have stumbled upon one of these untoward tabernacles which he speaks of. A more rebellious commodity of clay for a ground, as the poet calls it, no gentle mind—and sure hers is one of the gentlest—ever had to deal with.

Pondering upon her inexplicable visage—inexplicable, we mean, but by this modification of the theory—we have come to a conclusion that, if one must be plain, it is better to be plain all over, than amidst a tolerable residue of features to hang out one that shall be exceptionable. No one can say of Mrs. Conrady's countenance that it would be better if she had but a nose. It is impossible to pull her to pieces in this manner. We have seen the most malicious beauties of her own sex baffled in the attempt at a selection. The *tout-ensemble* defies particularizing. It is too complete—too consistent, as we may say—to admit of these invidious reservations. It is not as if some Apelles had picked out here a lip—and there a chin—out of the collected ugliness of Greece, to frame a model by. It is a symmetrical whole. We challenge the minutest connoisseur to

cavil at any part or parcel of the countenance in question; to say that this, or that, is improperly placed. We are convinced that true ugliness, no less than is affirmed of true beauty, is the result of harmony. Like that, too, it reigns without a competitor. No one ever saw Mrs. Conrady without pronouncing her to be the plainest woman that he ever met with in the course of his life. The first time that you are indulged with a sight of her face, is an era in your existence ever after. You are glad to have seen it—like Stonehenge. No one can pretend to forget it. No one ever apologised to her for meeting her in the street on such a day and not knowing her: the pretext would be too bare. Nobody can mistake her for another. Nobody can say of her, "I think I have seen that face somewhere, but I cannot call to mind where." You must remember that in such a parlour it first struck you—like a bust. You wondered where the owner of the house had picked it up. You wondered more when it began to move its lips —so mildly too! No one ever thought of asking her to sit for her picture. Lockets are for remembrance; and it would be clearly superfluous to hang an image at your heart, which, once seen, can never be out of it. It is not a mean face either; its entire originality precludes that. Neither is it of that order of plain faces which improve upon acquaintance. Some very good but ordinary people, by an unwearied perseverance in good offices, put a cheat upon our eyes; juggle our senses out of their natural impressions;

and set us upon discovering good indications in a countenance, which at first sight promised nothing less. We detect gentleness, which had escaped us, lurking about an under lip. But when Mrs. Conrady has done you a service, her face remains the same; when she has done you a thousand, and you know that she is ready to double the number, still it is that individual face. Neither can you say of it, that it would be a good face if it were not marked by the small-pox—a compliment which is always more admissive than excusatory—for either Mrs. Conrady never had the small-pox; or, as we say, took it kindly. No, it stands upon its own merits fairly. There it is. It is her mark, her token; that which she is known by.

XI

THAT WE MUST NOT LOOK A GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH:

Nor a lady's age in the parish register. We hope we have more delicacy than to do either; but some faces spare us the trouble of these *dental* inquiries. And what if the beast, which my friend would force upon my acceptance, prove, upon the face of it, a sorry Rosinante, a lean, ill-favoured jade, whom no gentleman could think of setting up in his stables? Must I, rather than not be obliged to my friend, make her a companion to Eclipse or Lightfoot? A horse-giver, no more than a horse-seller, has a right

to palm his spavined article upon us for good ware. An equivalent is expected in either case; and, with my own good-will, I could no more be cheated out of my thanks than out of my money. Some people have a knack of putting upon you gifts of no real value, to engage you to substantial gratitude. We thank them for nothing. Our friend Mitis carries this humour of never refusing a present, to the very point of absurdity—if it were possible to couple the ridiculous with so much mistaken delicacy and real good-nature. Not an apartment in his fine house (and he has a true taste in household decorations), but is stuffed up with some preposterous print or mirror—the worst adapted to his panels that may be—the presents of his friends that know his weakness; while his noble Vandykes are displaced to make room for a set of daubs, the work of some wretched artist of his acquaintance, who, having had them returned upon his hands for bad likenesses, finds his account in bestowing them here gratis. The good creature has not the heart to mortify the painter at the expense of an honest refusal. It is pleasant (if it did not vex one at the same time) to see him sitting in his dining parlour, surrounded with obscure aunts and cousins to God knows whom, while the true Lady Marys and Lady Bettys of his own honourable family, in favour to these adopted frights, are consigned to the staircase and the lumber-room. In like manner, his goodly shelves are one by one stripped of his fa-

vourite old authors, to give place to a collection of presentation copies—the flour and bran of modern poetry. A presentation copy, reader—if haply you are yet innocent of such favours—is a copy of a book which does not sell, sent you by the author, with his foolish autograph at the beginning of it; for which, if a stranger, he only demands your friendship; if a brother author, he expects from you a book of yours, which does sell, in return. We can speak to experience, having by us a tolerable assortment of these gift-horses. Not to ride a metaphor to death—we are willing to acknowledge that in some gifts there is sense. A duplicate out of a friend's library (where he has more than one copy of a rare author) is intelligible. There are favours, short of the pecuniary—a thing not fit to be hinted at among gentlemen—which confer as much grace upon the acceptor as the offerer; the kind, we confess, which is most to our palate, is of those little conciliatory missives, which for their vehicle generally choose a hamper—little odd presents of game, fruit, perhaps wine—though it is essential to the delicacy of the latter, that it be home-made. We love to have our friend in the country sitting thus at our table by proxy; to apprehend his presence (though a hundred miles may be between us) by a turkey, whose goodly aspect reflects to us his "plump corpusculum"; to taste him in grouse or woodcock; to feel him gliding down in the toast peculiar to the latter; to concorporate him in a slice

of Canterbury brawn. This is indeed to have him within ourselves; to know him intimately: such participation is methinks unitive, as the old theologians phrase it. For these considerations we should be sorry if certain restrictive regulations, which are thought to bear hard upon the peasantry of this country, were entirely done away with. A hare, as the law now stands, makes many friends. Caius conciliates Titius (knowing his *goût*) with a leash of partridges. Titius (suspecting his partiality for them) passes them to Lucius; who, in his turn, preferring his friend's relish to his own, makes them over to Marcius; till in their ever-widening progress, and round of unconscious circum-migration, they distribute the seeds of harmony over half a parish. We are well-disposed to this kind of sensible remembrances; and are the less apt to be taken by those little airy tokens—impalpable to the palate—which, under the names of rings, lockets, keepsakes, amuse some people's fancy mightily. We could never away with these indigestible trifles. They are the very kickshaws and foppery of friendship.

XII

THAT HOME IS HOME THOUGH IT IS NEVER SO HOMELY

Homes there are, we are sure, that are no homes; the home of the very poor man, and another which we shall speak to presently. Crowded places of

cheap entertainment, and the benches of alehouses, if they could speak, might bear mournful testimony to the first. To them the very poor man resorts for an image of the home which he cannot find at home. For a starved grate, and a scanty firing, that is not enough to keep alive the natural heat in the fingers of so many shivering children with their mother, he finds in the depths of winter always a blazing hearth, and a hob to warm his pittance of beer by. Instead of the clamours of a wife, made gaunt by famishing, he meets with a cheerful attendance beyond the merits of the trifle which he can afford to spend. He has companions which his home denies him, for the very poor man has no visitors. He can look into the goings on of the world, and speak a little to politics. At home there are no politics stirring, but the domestic. All interests, real or imaginary, all topics that should expand the mind of man, and connect him to a sympathy with general existence, are crushed in the absorbing consideration of food to be obtained for the family. Beyond the price of bread, news is senseless and impertinent. At home there is no larder. Here there is at least a show of plenty; and while he cooks his lean scrap of butcher's meat before the common bars, or munches his humbler cold viands, his relishing bread and cheese with an onion, in a corner, where no one reflects upon his poverty, he has a sight of the substantial joint providing for the landlord and his family. He takes an in-

terest in the dressing of it; and while he assists in removing the trivet from the fire, he feels that there is such a thing as beef and cabbage, which he was beginning to forget at home. All this while he deserts his wife and children. But what wife, and what children! Prosperous men, who object to this desertion, image to themselves some clean contented family like that which they go home to. But look at the countenance of the poor wives who follow and persecute their good man to the door of the public-house, which he is about to enter, when something like shame would restrain him, if stronger misery did not induce him to pass the threshold. That face, ground by want, in which every cheerful, every conversable lineament has been long effaced by misery,—is that a face to stay at home with? is it more a woman, or a wild cat? alas! it is the face of the wife of his youth, that once smiled upon him. It can smile no longer. What comforts can it share? what burthens can it lighten? Oh, 't is a fine thing to talk of the humble meal shared together! But what if there be no bread in the cupboard? The innocent prattle of his children takes out the sting of a man's poverty. But the children of the very poor do not prattle. It is none of the least frightful features in that condition, that there is no childishness in its dwellings. Poor people, said a sensible old nurse to us once, do not bring up their children; they drag them up.

The little careless darling of the wealthier nurs-

ery, in their hovel is transformed betimes into a premature reflecting person. No one has time to dandle it, no one thinks it worth while to coax it, to soothe it, to toss it up and down, to humour it. There is none to kiss away its tears. If it cries, it can only be beaten. It has been prettily said, that "a babe is fed with milk and praise." But the aliment of this poor babe was thin, unnourishing; the return to its little baby tricks, and efforts to engage attention, bitter ceaseless objurgation. It never had a toy, or knew what a coral meant. It grew up without the lullaby of nurses, it was a stranger to the patient fondle, the hushing caress, the attracting novelty, the costlier plaything, or the cheaper off-hand contrivance to divert the child; the prattled nonsense (best sense to it), the wise impertinences, the wholesome lies, the apt story interposed, that puts a stop to present sufferings, and awakens the passions of young wonder. It was never sung to—no one ever told to it a tale of the nursery. It was dragged up, to live or to die as it happened. It had no young dreams. It broke at once into the iron realities of life. A child exists not for the very poor as any object of dalliance; it is only another mouth to be fed, a pair of little hands to be betimes inured to labour. It is the rival, till it can be the co-operator, for food with the parent. It is never his mirth, his diversion, his solace: it never makes him young again, with recalling his young times. The children of the very poor have no young

times. It makes the very heart to bleed to overhear the casual street-talk between a poor woman and her little girl, a woman of the better sort of poor, in a condition rather above the squalid beings which we have been contemplating. It is not of toys, of nursery books, of summer holidays (fitting that age); of the promised sight, or play; of praised sufficiency at school. It is of mangling and clear-starching, of the price of coals, or of potatoes. The questions of the child, that should be the very outpourings of curiosity in idleness, are marked with forecast and melancholy providence. It has come to be a woman, before it was a child. It has learned to go to market; it chaffers, it haggles, it envies, it murmurs; it is knowing, acute, sharpened; it never prattles. Had we not reason to say that the home of the very poor is no home?

There is yet another home, which we are constrained to deny to be one. It has a larder, which the home of the poor man wants; its fireside conveniences, of which the poor dream not. But with all this, it is no home. It is—the house of a man that is infested with many visitors. May we be branded for the veriest churl, if we deny our heart to the many noble-hearted friends that at times exchange their dwelling for our poor roof! It is not of guests that we complain, but of endless, purposeless visitants; droppers-in, as they are called. We sometimes wonder from what sky they fall. It is the very error of the position of our lodging; its

horoscopy was ill calculated, being just situate in a medium—a plaguy suburban mid-space—fitted to catch idlers from town or country. We are older than we were, and age is easily put out of its way. We have fewer sands in our glass to reckon upon, and we cannot brook to see them drop in endlessly succeeding impertinences. At our time of life, to be alone sometimes is as needful as sleep. It is the refreshing sleep of the day. The growing infirmities of age manifest themselves in nothing more strongly than in an inveterate dislike of interruption. The thing which we are doing, we wish to be permitted to do. We have neither much knowledge nor devices; but there are fewer in the place to which we hasten. We are not willingly put out of our way, even at a game of nine-pins. While youth was, we had vast reversions in time future; we are reduced to a present pittance, and obliged to economise in that article. We bleed away our moments now as hardly as our ducats. We cannot bear to have our thin wardrobe eaten and fretted into by moths. We are willing to barter our good time with a friend, who gives us in exchange his own. Herein is the distinction between the genuine guest and the visitant. This latter takes your good time, and gives you his bad in exchange. The guest is domestic to you as your good cat, or household bird; the visitant is your fly, that flaps in at your window and out again, leaving nothing but a sense of disturbance, and victuals spoiled. The inferior functions of life begin

to move heavily. We cannot concoct our food with interruptions. Our chief meal, to be nutritive, must be solitary. With difficulty we can eat before a guest; and never understood what the relish of public feasting meant. Meats have no sapor, nor digestion fair play, in a crowd. The unexpected coming in of a visitant stops the machine. There is a punctual generation who time their calls to the precise commencement of your dining-hour—not to eat—but to see you eat. Our knife and fork drop instinctively, and we feel that we have swallowed our latest morsel. Others again show their genius, as we have said, in knocking the moment you have just sat down to a book. They have a peculiar compassionate sneer, with which they "hope that they do not interrupt your studies." Though they flutter off the next moment, to carry their impertinences to the nearest student that they can call their friend, the tone of the book is spoiled; we shut the leaves, and with Dante's lovers, read no more that day. It were well if the effect of intrusion were simply coextensive with its presence, but it mars all the good hours afterwards. These scratches in appearance leave an orifice that closes not hastily. "It is a prostitution of the bravery of friendship," says worthy Bishop Taylor, "to spend it upon impertinent people, who are, it may be, loads to their families, but can never ease my loads." This is the secret of their gaddings, their visits, and morning calls. They too have homes, which are—no homes.

XIII

THAT YOU MUST LOVE ME AND LOVE MY DOG

"Good sir, or madam—as it may be—we most willingly embrace the offer of your friendship. We have long known your excellent qualities. We have wished to have you nearer to us; to hold you within the very innermost fold of our heart. We can have no reserve towards a person of your open and noble nature. The frankness of your humour suits us exactly. We have been long looking for such a friend. Quick—let us disburthen our troubles into each other's bosom—let us make our single joys shine by reduplication.—But *yap, yap, yap!* what is this confounded cur? he has fastened his tooth, which is none of the bluntest, just in the fleshy part of my leg."

"It is my dog, sir. You must love him for my sake. Here, Test—Test—Test!"

"But he has bitten me."

"Ay, that he is apt to do, till you are better acquainted with him. I have had him three years. He never bites me."

Yap, yap, yap!—"He is at it again."

"Oh, sir, you must not kick him. He does not like to be kicked. I expect my dog to be treated with all the respect due to myself."

"But do you always take him out with you, when you go a friendship-hunting?"

"Invariably. 'T is the sweetest, prettiest, best-conditioned animal. I call him my *test*—the touch-stone by which to try a friend. No one can properly be said to love me, who does not love him."

"Excuse us, dear sir—or madam, aforesaid—if upon further consideration we are obliged to decline the otherwise invaluable offer of your friendship. We do not like dogs."

"Mighty well, sir,—you know the conditions—you may have worse offers. Come along, Test."

The above dialogue is not so imaginary, but that, in the intercourse of life, we have had frequent occasions of breaking off an agreeable intimacy by reason of these canine appendages. They do not always come in the shape of dogs; they sometimes wear the more plausible and human character of kinsfolk, near acquaintances, my friend's friend, his partner, his wife, or his children. We could never yet form a friendship—not to speak of more delicate correspondence—however much to our taste, without the intervention of some third anomaly, some impertinent clog affixed to the relation—the understood *dog* in the proverb. The good things of life are not to be had singly, but come to us with a mixture; like a school-boy's holiday, with a task affixed to the tail of it. What a delightful companion is * * * *, if he did not always bring his tall cousin with him! He seems to grow with him; like some of those double births which we remember to have read of with such wonder and delight in the old

"Athenian Oracle," where Swift commenced author by writing Pindaric Odes (what a beginning for him!) upon Sir William Temple. There is the picture of the brother, with the little brother peeping out at his shoulder; a species of fraternity, which we have no name of kin close enough to comprehend. When * * * * comes, poking in his head and shoulder into your room, as if to feel his entry, you think, surely you have now got him to yourself—what a three hours' chat we shall have!—but ever in the haunch of him, and before his diffident body is well disclosed in your apartment, appears the haunting shadow of the cousin, over-peering his modest kinsman, and sure to overlay the expected good talk with his insufferable procerity of stature, and uncorresponding dwarfishness of observation. Misfortunes seldom come alone. 'T is hard when a blessing comes accompanied. Cannot we like Sempronia, without sitting down to chess with her eternal brother; or know Sulpicia, without knowing all the round of her card-playing relations?—must my friend's brethren of necessity be mine also? must we be hand and glove with Dick Selby the parson, or Jack Selby the calico-printer, because W. S., who is neither, but a ripe wit and a critic, has the misfortune to claim a common parentage with them? Let him lay down his brothers; and 't is odds but we will cast him in a pair of ours (we have a superflux) to balance the concession. Let F. H. lay down his garrulous uncle; and Honorius dis-

miss his vapid wife, and superfluous establishment of six boys—things between boy and manhood—too ripe for play, too raw for conversation—that come in, impudently staring his father's old friend out of countenance; and will neither aid nor let alone, the conference; that we may once more meet upon equal terms, as we were wont to do in the disengaged state of bachelorhood.

It is well if your friend, or mistress, be content with these canicular probations. Few young ladies but in this sense keep a dog. But while Rutilia hounds at you her tiger aunt; or Ruspina expects you to cherish and fondle her viper sister, whom she has preposterously taken into her bosom, to try stinging conclusions upon your constancy; they must not complain if the house be rather thin of suitors. Scylla must have broken off many excellent matches in her time, if she insisted upon all that loved her loving her dogs also.

An excellent story to this moral is told of Merry, of Della Cruscan memory. In tender youth he loved and courted a modest appanage to the Opera—in truth, a dancer—who had won him by the artless contrast between her manners and situation. She seemed to him a native violet, that had been transplanted by some rude accident into that exotic and artificial hotbed. Nor, in truth, was she less genuine and sincere than she appeared to him. He wooed and won this flower. Only for appearance sake, and for due honour to the bride's relations, she craved

that she might have the attendance of her friends and kindred at the approaching solemnity. The request was too amiable not to be conceded; and in this solicitude for conciliating the good-will of mere relations, he found a presage of her superior attentions to himself, when the golden shaft should have "killed the flock of all affections else." The morning came: and at the Star and Garter, Richmond—the place appointed for the breakfasting—accompanied with one English friend, he impatiently awaited what reinforcements the bride should bring to grace the ceremony. A rich muster she had made. They came in six coaches—the whole corps du Ballet —French, Italian, men and women. Monsieur de B., the famous *pirouetter* of the day, led his fair spouse, but craggy, from the banks of the Seine. The Prima Donna had sent her excuse. But the first and second Buffa were there; and Signor Sc—, and Signora Ch—, and Madame V—, with a countless cavalcade besides of chorusers, figurantes! at the sight of whom Merry afterwards declared, that "then for the first time it struck him seriously, that he was about to marry—a dancer." But there was no help for it. Besides, it was her day; these were, in fact, her friends and kinsfolk. The assemblage, though whimsical, was all very natural. But when the bride—handing out of the last coach a still more extraordinary figure than the rest—presented to him as her *father*—the gentleman that was to *give her away*—no less a person than Signor Del-

pini himself—with a sort of pride, as much as to say, See what I have brought to do us honour!—the thought of so extraordinary a paternity quite overcame him; and slipping away under some pretence from the bride and her motley adherents, poor Merry took horse from the back yard to the nearest sea-coast, from which, shipping himself to America, he shortly after consoled himself with a more congenial match in the person of Miss Brunton; relieved from his intended clown father, and a bevy of painted Buffas for bridemaids.

XIV

THAT WE SHOULD RISE WITH THE LARK

At what precise minute that little airy musician doffs his night-gear, and prepares to tune up his unseasonable matins, we are not naturalist enough to determine. But for a mere human gentleman—that has no orchestra business to call him from his warm bed to such preposterous exercises—we take ten, or half after ten (eleven, of course, during this Christmas solstice), to be the very earliest hour at which he can begin to think of abandoning his pillow. To think of it, we say; for to do it in earnest requires another half hour's good consideration. Not but there are pretty sun-risings, as we are told, and such like gawds, abroad in the world, in summer-time especially, some hours before what we have assigned; which a gentleman may see, as they

say, only for getting up. But having been tempted once or twice, in earlier life, to assist at those ceremonies, we confess our curiosity abated. We are no longer ambitious of being the sun's courtiers, to attend at his morning levees. We hold the good hours of the dawn too sacred to waste them upon such observances; which have in them, besides, something Pagan and Persic. To say truth, we never anticipated our usual hour, or got up with the sun (as 't is called), to go a journey, or upon a foolish whole day's pleasuring, but we suffered for it all the long hours after in listlessness and headaches; Nature herself sufficiently declaring her sense of our presumption in aspiring to regulate our frail waking courses by the measures of that celestial and sleepless traveller. We deny not that there is something sprightly and vigorous, at the outset especially, in these break-of-day excursions. It is flattering to get the start of a lazy world; to conquer Death by proxy in his image. But the seeds of sleep and mortality are in us; and we pay usually, in strange qualms before night falls, the penalty of the unnatural inversion. Therefore, while the busy part of mankind are fast huddling on their clothes, are already up and about their occupations, content to have swallowed their sleep by wholesale; we choose to linger a-bed and digest our dreams. It is the very time to recombine the wandering images, which night in a confused mass presented; to snatch them from forgetfulness; to shape, and mould them.

Some people have no good of their dreams. Like fast feeders, they gulp them too grossly, to taste them curiously. We love to chew the cud of a foregone vision; to collect the scattered rays of a brighter phantasm, or act over again, with firmer nerves, the sadder nocturnal tragedies; to drag into daylight a struggling and half-vanishing nightmare; to handle and examine the terrors, or the airy solaces. We have too much respect for these spiritual communications, to let them go so lightly. We are not so stupid, or so careless as that Imperial forgetter of his dreams, that we should need a seer to remind us of the form of them. They seem to us to have as much significance as our waking concerns; or rather to import us more nearly, as more nearly we approach by years to the shadowy world, whither we are hastening. We have shaken hands with the world's business; we have done with it; we have discharged ourself of it. Why should we get up? we have neither suit to solicit, nor affairs to manage. The drama has shut in upon us at the fourth act. We have nothing here to expect, but in a short time a sick-bed, and a dismissal. We delight to anticipate death by such shadows as night affords. We are already half acquainted with ghosts. We were never much in the world. Disappointment early struck a dark veil between us and its dazzling illusions. Our spirits showed gray before our hairs. The mighty changes of the world already appear as but the vain stuff out of which dramas

are composed. We have asked no more of life than what the mimic images in playhouses present us with. Even those types have waxed fainter. Our clock appears to have struck. We are SUPERANNUATED. In this dearth of mundane satisfaction, we contract politic alliances with shadows. It is good to have friends at court. The extracted media of dreams seem no ill introduction to that spiritual presence, upon which, in no long time, we expect to be thrown. We are trying to know a little of the usages of that colony; to learn the language and the faces we shall meet with there, that we may be the less awkward at our first coming among them. We willingly call a phantom our fellow, as knowing we shall soon be of their dark companionship. Therefore we cherish dreams. We try to spell in them the alphabet of the invisible world; and think we know already how it shall be with us. Those uncouth shapes which, while we clung to flesh and blood, affrighted us, have become familiar. We feel attenuated into their meagre essences, and have given the hand of half-way approach to incorporeal being. We once thought life to be something; but it has unaccountably fallen from us before its time. Therefore we choose to dally with visions. The sun has no purposes of ours to light us to. Why should we get up?

XV

THAT WE SHOULD LIE DOWN WITH THE LAMB

We could never quite understand the philosophy of this arrangement, or the wisdom of our ancestors in sending us for instruction to these woolly bedfellows. A sheep, when it is dark, has nothing to do but to shut his silly eyes, and sleep if he can. Man found out long sixes—Hail, candle-light! without disparagement to sun or moon, the kindliest luminary of the three—if we may not rather style thee their radiant deputy, mild viceroy of the moon!—We love to read, talk, sit silent, eat, drink, sleep, by candle-light. They are everybody's sun and moon. This is our peculiar and household planet. Wanting it, what savage unsocial nights must our ancestors have spent, wintering in caves and unillumined fastnesses! They must have lain about and grumbled at one another in the dark. What repartees could have passed, when you must have felt about for a smile, and handled a neighbour's cheek to be sure that he understood it? This accounts for the seriousness of the elder poetry. It has a sombre cast (try Hesiod or Ossian), derived from the tradition of those unlantern'd nights. Jokes came in with candles. We wonder how they saw to pick up a pin, if they had any. How did they sup? what a mélange of chance carving they must have made of it?—here one had got a leg of a goat, when he

wanted a horse's shoulder—there another had dipped his scooped palm in a kid-skin of wild honey, when he meditated right mare's milk. There is neither good eating nor drinking in fresco. Who, even in these civilized times, has never experienced this, when at some economic table he has commenced dining after dusk, and waited for the flavour till the lights came? The senses absolutely give and take reciprocally. Can you tell pork from veal in the dark? or distinguish Sherris from pure Malaga? Take away the candle from the smoking man; by the glimmering of the left ashes, he knows that he is still smoking, but he knows it only by an inference; till the restored light, coming in aid of the olfactories, reveals to both senses the full aroma. Then how he redoubles his puffs! how he burnishes!—There is absolutely no such thing as reading but by a candle. We have tried the affectation of a book at noon-day in gardens, and in sultry arbours; but it was labour thrown away. Those gay motes in the beam come about you, hovering and teasing, like so many coquettes, that will have you all to their self and are jealous of your abstractions. By the midnight-taper, the writer digests his meditations. By the same light we must approach to their perusal, if we would catch the flame, the odour. It is a mockery, all that is reported of the influential Phœbus. No true poem ever owed its birth to the sun's light. They are abstracted works—

Things that were born, when none but the still night,
And his dumb candle, saw his pinching throes.

Marry, daylight—daylight might furnish the images, the crude material; but for the fine shapings, the true turning and filing (as mine author hath it), they must be content to hold their inspiration of the candle. The mild internal light, that reveals them, like fires on the domestic hearth, goes out in the sunshine. Night and silence call out the starry fancies. Milton's Morning Hymn in Paradise, we would hold a good wager, was penned at midnight; and Taylor's rich description of a sunrise smells decidedly of the taper. Even ourself, in these our humbler lucubrations tune our best-measured cadences (Prose has her cadences) not unfrequently to the charm of the drowsier watchman, "blessing the doors"; or the wild sweep of winds at midnight. Even now a loftier speculation than we have yet attempted, courts our endeavours. We would indite something about the Solar System.—*Betty, bring the candles.*

XVI

THAT A SULKY TEMPER IS A MISFORTUNE

We grant that it is, and a very serious one—to a man's friends, and to all that have to do with him; but whether the condition of the man himself is so much to be deplored, may admit of a question. We can speak a little to it, being ourself but lately re-

covered—we whisper it in confidence, reader—out of a long and desperate fit of the sullens. Was the cure a blessing? The conviction which wrought it came too clearly to leave a scruple of the fanciful injuries—for they were mere fancies—which had provoked the humour. But the humour itself was too self-pleasing while it lasted—we know how bare we lay ourself in the confession—to be abandoned all at once with the grounds of it. We still brood over wrongs which we know to have been imaginary; and for our old acquaintance N——, whom we find to have been a truer friend than we took him for, we substitute some phantom—a Caius or a Titius—as like him as we dare to form it, to wreak our yet unsatisfied resentments on. It is mortifying to fall at once from the pinnacle of neglect; to forego the idea of having been ill-used and contumaciously treated by an old friend. The first thing to aggrandize a man in his own conceit, is to conceive of himself as neglected. There let him fix if he can. To undeceive him is to deprive him of the most tickling morsel within the range of self-complacency. No flattery can come near it. Happy is he who suspects his friend of an injustice; but supremely blest, who thinks all his friends in a conspiracy to depress and undervalue him. There is a pleasure (we sing not to the profane) far beyond the reach of all that the world counts joy—a deep, enduring satisfaction in the depths, where the superficial seek it not, of discontent. Were we to recite

one half of this mystery—which we were let into by our late dissatisfaction, all the world would be in love with disrespect; we should wear a slight for a bracelet, and neglects and contumacies would be the only matter for courtship. Unlike to that mysterious book in the Apocalypse, the study of this mystery is unpalatable only in the commencement. The first sting of a suspicion is grievous; but wait—out of that wound, which to flesh and blood seemed so difficult, there is balm and honey to be extracted. Your friend passed you on such or such a day,—having in his company one that you conceived worse than ambiguously disposed towards you,—passed you in the street without notice. To be sure, he is something short-sighted; and it was in your power to have accosted *him*. But facts and sane inferences are trifles to a true adept in the science of dissatisfaction. He must have seen you; and S——, who was with him, must have been the cause of the contempt. It galls you, and well it may. But have patience. Go home, and make the worst of it, and you are a made man from this time. Shut yourself up, and—rejecting, as an enemy to your peace, every whispering suggestion that but insinuates there may be a mistake—reflect seriously upon the many lesser instances which you had begun to perceive, in proof of your friend's disaffection towards you. None of them singly was much to the purpose, but the aggregate weight is positive; and you have this last affront to clench them. Thus far the process

is anything but agreeable. But now to your relief comes the comparative faculty. You conjure up all the kind feelings you have had for your friend; what you have been to him, and what you would have been to him, if he would have suffered you; how you defended him in this or that place; and his good name—his literary reputation, and so forth, was always dearer to you than your own! Your heart, spite of itself, yearns towards him. You could weep tears of blood but for a restraining pride. How say you? do you not yet begin to apprehend a comfort?—some allay of sweetness in the bitter waters? Stop not here, nor penuriously cheat yourself of your reversions. You are on vantage ground. Enlarge your speculations, and take in the rest of your friends, as a spark kindles more sparks. Was there one among them who has not to you proved hollow, false, slippery as water? Begin to think that the relation itself is inconsistent with mortality. That the very idea of friendship, with its component parts, as honour, fidelity, steadiness, exists but in your single bosom. Image yourself to yourself as the only possible friend in a world incapable of that communion. Now the gloom thickens. The little star of self-love twinkles, that is to encourage you through deeper glooms than this. You are not yet at the half point of your elevation. You are not yet, believe me, half sulky enough. Adverting to the world in general (as these circles in the mind will spread to infinity), reflect with what strange injustice you have been

treated in quarters where (setting gratitude and the expectation of friendly returns aside as chimeras) you pretended no claim beyond justice, the naked due of all men. Think the very idea of right and fit fled from the earth, or your breast the solitary receptacle of it till you have swelled yourself into at least one hemisphere; the other being the vast Arabia Stony of your friends and the world aforesaid. To grow bigger every moment in your own conceit, and the world to lessen; to deify yourself at the expense of your species; to judge the world —this is the acme and supreme point of your mystery—these the true PLEASURES OF SULKINESS. We profess no more of this grand secret than what ourself experimented on one rainy afternoon in the last week, sulking in our study. We had proceeded to the penultimate point, at which the true adept seldom stops, where the consideration of benefit forgot is about to merge in the meditation of general injustice—when a knock at the door was followed by the entrance of the very friend whose not seeing of us in the morning (for we will now confess the case our own), an accidental oversight, had given rise to so much agreeable generalization! To mortify us still more, and take down the whole flattering superstructure which pride had piled upon neglect, he had brought in his hand the identical S——, in whose favour we had suspected him of the contumacy. Asseverations were needless, where the frank manner of them both was convictive of the in-

jurious nature of the suspicion. We fancied that they perceived our embarrassment; but were too proud, or something else, to confess to the secret of it. We had been but too lately in the condition of the noble patient in Argos:—

> Qui se credebat miros audire tragœdos,
> In vacuo lætus sessor plausorque theatro—

and could have exclaimed with equal reason against the friendly hands that cured us—

> Pol, me occidistis, amici,
> Non servastis, ait; cui sic extorta voluptas,
> Et demptus per vim mentis gratissimus error.

NOTES

NOTES

THE Second Series of Elia was published in a collected form by Mr. Moxon in 1833. It was furnished with a Preface, purporting to be written by "a friend of the late Elia," announcing his death, and commenting freely on his character and habits. This Preface (written, of course, by Lamb himself) is placed in the present edition at the beginning of this Series. Elia is here supposed to have died in the interval between the publication of the First and Second Series. From the opening sentences we should conclude that it was at first intended as a postscript to the First Series, and indeed it originally appeared in the *London Magazine* for January 1823. But this design, if ever entertained, was not carried out.

I have spoken in my Introduction of the estimate here pronounced by Lamb himself on his own writings, as in my memoir of Lamb I had occasion to deal with the same Preface as throwing light on the causes of his unpopularity. In each case he shows a rare degree of self-knowledge. If they stood alone they would entirely account for Carlyle's harsh verdict. "Few professed *literati* were of his councils," and he would be little disposed to show the serious side of himself, still less the better side of his humour, to such as Carlyle. To the evidence of such friends as Hood, Patmore, and Procter, confirming Lamb's own account, I may here add a piece of fresh testimony from Hazlitt. It occurs in the essay "On Coffee-House Politicians," one of the *Table-Talk* series:—

"I will, however, admit that the said Elia is the worst company in the world in bad company, if it be granted me that in good company he is nearly the best that can be. He is one of those of whom it may be said, *Tell me your company*

and I'll tell you your manners. He is the creature of sympathy, and makes good whatever opinion you seem to entertain of him. He cannot outgo the apprehensions of the circle, and invariably acts up or down to the point of refinement or vulgarity at which they pitch him. He appears to take a pleasure in exaggerating the prejudices of strangers against him, a pride in confirming the prepossessions of friends. In whatever scale of intellect he is placed, he is as lively or as stupid as the rest can be for their lives. If you think him odd and ridiculous, he becomes more and more so every minute, *à la folie*, till he is a wonder gazed at by all. Set him against a good wit and a ready apprehension, and he brightens more and more—

> 'Or like a gate of steel
> Fronting the sun, receives and renders back
> Its figure and its heat.'"

BLAKESMOOR IN H——SHIRE

("London Magazine," September 1824)

BLAKESMOOR, as has been already observed, was Blakesware, a dower-house of the Plumers, about five miles from Ware, in Hertfordshire. If there were ever any doubt on the subject, Lamb's own words are decisive. In a letter to Bernard Barton, of August 10, 1827, occurs the following charming passage:—"You have well described your old-fashioned paternal hall. Is it not odd that every one's recollections are of some such place? I had my Blakesware ('Blakesmoor' in the *London*). Nothing fills a child's mind like a large old mansion, better if un- or partially-occupied: peopled with the spirits of deceased members of the county and justices of the Quorum. Would I were buried in the peopled solitudes of one with my feelings at seven years old! Those marble busts of the em-

perors, they seemed as if they were to stand for ever, as they had stood from the living days of Rome, in that old marble hall, and I to partake of their permanency. Eternity was, while I thought not of time. But he thought of me, and they are toppled down, and corn covers the spot of the noble old dwelling and its princely gardens. I feel like a grasshopper that, chirping about the grounds, escaped the scythe only by my littleness."

In face of this letter, it might seem strange that most of Lamb's editors have unhesitatingly asserted that the original of Lamb's Blakesmoor was Gilston, the other seat of the Plumers, near Harlow, in the same county. The origin of the mistake is to be found in the history of the Plumer property, after the death of Mr. William Plumer, the member for Higham Ferrers, in 1822. Mr. Plumer died without children, and left his estates at Blakesware and Gilston to his widow. The house at Blakesware, which, as we have seen, had been partially dismantled in Mr. Plumer's lifetime, was now pulled to the ground—its principal contents having been already removed to the other house at Gilston. It was after its final demolition that Lamb paid the visit here recorded, to look once more on the remains of a place associated with so many happy memories. The widow, Mrs. Plumer, not long after her first husband's death, married Commander Lewin of the Royal Navy, and finally, after his death, married for the third time, in 1828, Mr. Ward, author of the once popular novel *Tremaine*. On marrying Mrs. Plumer Lewin, Mr. Ward received the royal permission to take and use the name of Plumer as a prefix to that of Ward. Mr. and Mrs. Plumer Ward continued to live at the family residence of the Plumers at Gilston.

Mr. P. G. Patmore—the father of the late Mr. Coventry Patmore—made the acquaintance of Mr. Plumer Ward in 1824, and in a book, entitled *My Friends and Acquaintance*,

published in 1854, gave an interesting account of Mr. Ward, together with a full description, supplied by that gentleman himself, of the furniture and general arrangements of Gilston House. Among these appear the Twelve Cæsars and the Marble Hall, and other features of the old house at Blakesware, familiar to readers of Charles Lamb, which had been in fact removed from the one house to the other. Mr. Patmore, apparently ignorant of the existence of any other residence belonging to the Plumers, at once assumed that Gilston had been the house celebrated by Lamb, and announced the discovery with some natural exultation. From that time Mr. Patmore's version of the facts has been generally accepted. Gilston House was pulled down in 1851. The contents, except such as were used for the new house erected at a short distance, were sold by auction. The Twelve Cæsars, and many other things, went to Wardour Street.

Nothing remains of Blakesware save the "firry wilderness" and the faint undulations in the grassy meadow, where the ample pleasure garden rose backwards in triple terraces. But the rural tranquillity of the surrounding country is still unchanged, and that depth and warmth of colouring in the foliage that gives to the Hertfordshire landscape a character all its own. It is a day well spent to make an excursion from the country town of Ware, and wander over the site of the old place, and among the graves of Widford churchyard. It will be felt then how, with this "cockney of cockneys," the beauty of an English home—a "haunt of ancient peace"—had passed into his life and become a part of his genius and himself.

I was the true descendant of those old W——s.

Lamb disguises the family of Plumer under this change of initial. He certainly did not mean the Wards—Mr. Ward not having become connected with the family of Plumer till several years later than the date of this essay.

NOTES

So like my Alice!

See notes on *Dream Children* in the First Series.

Compare with the essay Mary Lamb's story of "the Young Mahomedan" in *Mrs. Leicester's School.* Blakesware is there again described, as remembered by Mary Lamb when a child.

POOR RELATIONS

("London Magazine," May 1823)

Richard Amlet, Esq., in the play.

See Vanbrugh's comedy, *The Confederacy.*

Poor W——.

The Favell of the essay, *Christ's Hospital Five-and-thirty Years Ago.* Lamb, in his *Key* to the initials used by him, has written against the initial F., there employed: "Favell left Cambridge, because he was asham'd of his father, who was a house-painter there." He was a Grecian in the school in Lamb's time, and when at Cambridge wrote to the Duke of York for a commission in the army, which was sent him. Lamb here changes both his friend's name and his University.

Like Satan, "knew his mounted sign—and fled."

See the concluding lines of *Paradise Lost*, Book iv., of which this is a more than usually free adaptation. In the incident referred to, the angel Gabriel and Satan are on the point of engaging in struggle, when

> "The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
> Hung forth in heaven his golden scales."

Satan's attention being called to the sight,

> "—The fiend looked up, and knew
> His mounted *scale* aloft: nor more: but fled
> Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night."

NOTES

DETACHED THOUGHTS ON BOOKS AND READING

("London Magazine," July 1822)

The wretched Malone.

This happened in 1793, on occasion of Malone's visit to Stratford to examine the municipal and other records of that town, for the purposes of his edition of Shakspeare.

Martin B——.

Martin Charles Burney, the only son of Admiral Burney, and one of Lamb's life-long friends. Lamb dedicated to him the second volume of his collected writings in 1818 in a prefatory sonnet, in which he says—

> "In all my threadings of this worldly maze
> (And I have watched thee almost from a child),
> Free from self-seeking, envy, low design,
> I have not found a whiter soul than thine."

Martin Burney was originally an attorney, but left that branch of the profession for the Bar, where, however, he was not successful. Mr. Burney died in London in 1852.

A quaint poetess of our day.

Mary Lamb. The lines will be found in Charles and Mary Lamb's *Poetry for Children.*

STAGE ILLUSION

("London Magazine," August 1825)

NOTES

TO THE SHADE OF ELLISTON

("Englishman's Magazine," August 1831)

Up thither like aërial vapours fly.
A parody of the well-known description of the Limbo of Vanity in the third book of the *Paradise Lost.*

ELLISTONIANA

("Englishman's Magazine," August 1831)

G. D.
George Dyer.

Sir A—— C——.
Sir Anthony Carlisle, the surgeon.

These two papers were prompted by the death of the popular comedian in July 1831.

THE OLD MARGATE HOY

("London Magazine," July 1823)

CHARLES and Mary Lamb had actually, as here stated, passed a week's holiday together at Margate, when the former was quite a boy. In his early days of authorship Charles had utilised the experience for a sonnet, one of the first he published—"written at midnight by the sea-side after a voyage." It is amusing to note these two different treatments of the same theme:—

> "O winged bark! how swift along the night
> Passed thy proud keel; nor shall I let go by
> Lightly of that dread hour the memory,
> When wet and chilly on thy deck I stood
> Unbonneted, and gazed upon the flood."

NOTES

"*For many a day, and many a dreadful night,*
Incessant labouring round the stormy Cape."

Thomson's *Seasons*—"Summer," l. 1002.

"*Be but as buggs to fearen babes withal,*
Compared with the creatures in the sea's entral."

Spenser, *Fairy Queen*, Book ii. Canto xii.

"*The daughters of Cheapside and wives of Lombard Street.*"

Imperfectly remembered from the *Ode to Master Anthony Stafford*, by Thomas Randolph (1605–1635):—

> There from the tree
> We 'll cherries pluck, and pick the strawberry;
> And every day
> Go see the wholesome country girls make hay,
> Whose brown hath lovelier grace
> Than any painted face
> That I do know
> Hyde Park can show.
> Where I had rather gain a kiss than meet
> (Though some of them in greater state
> Might court my love with plate)
> The beauties of the Cheap, and wives of Lombard Street.

THE CONVALESCENT

("London Magazine," July 1825)

LAMB had an illness of the kind here described in the winter of 1824–25, and the condition in which it left him seems to have been one of the causes of his proposed retirement from the India House. As with all the other essays which savour of the autobiographical, the freshness and precision of the experience is one of its great charms.

NOTES

SANITY OF TRUE GENIUS

("New Monthly Magazine," May 1826)

"So strong a wit," says Cowley.
From Cowley's fine lines—a true "In Memoriam"—*On the death of Mr. William Hervey.*

The common run of Lane's novels.
Better known as the novels of the Minerva Press, from which Lane the publisher issued innumerable works.

That wonderful episode of the Cave of Mammon.
See *Fairy Queen*, Book ii. Canto vii., the Legend of Sir Guyon.

CAPTAIN JACKSON

("London Magazine," November 1824)

IT has been suggested that this exquisite character-sketch may have been taken from Lamb's old friend Mr. Randal Norris, of the Inner Temple. An obvious objection to this theory—that Mr. Norris was still living when the sketch appeared (he did not die till 1827)—is not so conclusive as it might seem. Lamb was in the habit of describing living persons with a surprising frankness. The account of James Elia, for example, in *My Relations*, was written and published in his brother's lifetime. Mr. Norris had two daughters, and although Sub-Treasurer to the Inner Temple, was never apparently in very flourishing circumstances. The very unlikeness of most of the incidents here recorded to those of Randal Norris's actual life, is quite after Lamb's custom. Mr. Norris lived and died in the Temple; he was *not* "steeped in poverty to the lips," and his wife was not a Scotchwoman, but a na-

tive of Widford, in Hertfordshire, and a friend of old Mrs. Field. Lamb may have introduced the significant reference to the wedding-day on purpose to amuse his sister. When Randal Norris was married (his daughter tells me) Mary Lamb was bridesmaid, and the happy pair, in company with Miss Lamb, spent the day together at Richmond.

When we came down through Glasgow town.
From the beautiful old ballad, a special favourite with Lamb—

> "Waly, waly, up the bank,
> And waly, waly, down the brae."

THE SUPERANNUATED MAN

("London Magazine," May 1825)

AN account, substantially true to facts, of Lamb's retirement from the India House. This event occurred on the last Tuesday of March 1825, and Lamb, after his custom, proceeded to make it a subject for his next essay of Elia. He here transforms the directors of the India House into a private firm of merchants. The names Boldero, Merryweather, and the others, were not those of directors of the company at the time of Lamb's retirement. Lamb retired on a pension of £450, being two-thirds of his salary at that date. Nine pounds a year were deducted to assure a pension to Mary Lamb in the event of her surviving her brother. "Here am I," writes Charles to Wordsworth shortly afterwards, "after thirty-three years' slavery, sitting in my own room at eleven o'clock, this finest of all April mornings, a freed man, with £441 a year for the remainder of my life, live I as long as John Dennis, who outlived his annuity and starved at ninety."

—that's born and has his years come to him,
In some green desert.

Inaccurately quoted from Middleton's *Mayor of Queenboro'*, Act I. Sc. 1. It should be "in a rough desart."

A Tragedy by Sir Robert Howard.

The lines are from *The Vestal Virgin, or the Roman Ladies*, Act V. Sc. 1. Sir Robert Howard (1626–1698) was Dryden's brother-in-law, and joint author with him of the *Indian Queen*.

As low as to the fiends.

From the dramatic fragment, concerning Priam's slaughter, declaimed by the player in *Hamlet*.

Of Lamb's fellow-clerks in the India House, referred to here by their initials, Ch—— was a Mr. Chambers, Pl—— was W. D. Plumley, the son of a silversmith in Cornhill, and Do—— a Mr. Henry Dodwell, evidently one of Lamb's most intimate friends in the office. Their names occur together in an unpublished letter of Lamb's to Mr. Dodwell, now lying before me. It is addressed "H. Dodwell, Esq., India House, London. (In his absence may be opened by Mr. Chambers.)" The letter is so characteristic that I may be allowed to quote some passages. It is written from Calne in Wiltshire, where Lamb was spending his summer holiday, in July 1816:—

"My dear Fellow—I have been in a lethargy this long while and forgotten London, Westminster, Marybone, Paddington; they all went clean out of my head, till happening to go to a neighbour's in this good borough of Calne, for want of whist-players we fell upon *Commerce*. The word awoke me to a remembrance of my professional avocations and the long-continued strife which I have been these twenty-four years endeavouring to compose between those grand Irrecon-

cileables—Cash and Commerce. I instantly called for an almanack, which, with some difficulty was procured at a fortune-teller's in the vicinity (for the happy holiday people here having nothing to do keep no account of time), and found that by dint of duty I must attend in Leadenhall on Wednesday morning next, and shall attend accordingly. . . . Adieu! Ye fields, ye shepherds and—herdesses, and dairies and cream-pots, and fairies, and dances upon the green. I come! I come! Don't drag me so hard by the hair of my head, Genius of British India! I know my hour is come—Faustus must give up his soul, O Lucifer, O Mephistopheles! Can you make out what all this letter is about? I am afraid to look it over. CH. LAMB.

"Calne, Wilts. Friday, July something, Old Style, 1816. No new style here—all the styles are old, and some of the gates too for that matter."

THE GENTEEL STYLE IN WRITING

("NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE," MARCH 1826)

THIS essay, as originally published, formed one of the series of *Popular Fallacies*—with the title, "That my Lord Shaftesbury and Sir William Temple are models of the Genteel Style of Writing."

My Lord Shaftesbury.

Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury, and author of the *Characteristics*. In his essay on *Books and Reading* Lamb had said, "I can read anything which I call *a book*. Shaftesbury is not too genteel for me, nor Jonathan Wild too low." The essays of Temple here cited are those *Of Gardening*, *Of Health and Long Life*, *The Cure of the Gout by Moxa*, and *Of Poetry*.

NOTES

BARBARA S——

("London Magazine," April 1825)

THE note appended by Lamb to this essay, as to the heroine being named Street, and having three times changed her name by successive marriages, is one of the most elaborate of his fictions. The real heroine of the story, as admitted by Lamb at the time, was the admirable comedian, Fanny Kelly, an attached friend of Charles and Mary Lamb, who has just died (December 1882) at the advanced age of ninety-two. In the year 1875 Miss Kelly furnished Mr. Charles Kent, who was editing the centenary edition of Lamb's works, with her own interesting version of the anecdote. It was in 1799, when Fanny Kelly was a child of nine, that the incident occurred, not at the old Bath Theatre, but at Drury Lane, where she had been admitted as a "miniature chorister," at a salary of a pound a week. After his manner, Lamb has changed every detail—the heroine, the site of the theatre, the amount of the salary, the name of the treasurer. Even following Charles Lamb, Miss Kelly has told her own story with much graphic power.

Miss Kelly, with the "divine plain face," was a special favourite of Lamb's. See his sonnets "To Miss Kelly," and "To a celebrated female performer in *The Blind Boy*."

She would have done the elder child in Morton's pathetic afterpiece to the life.

This is an ingenious way of intimating that Miss Kelly *did* play the elder child in the *Children in the Wood*. The drama was first produced in 1793. The incident of the roast-fowl and the spilt salt, recorded later on, occurs in the last scene of this play. The famished children, just rescued from the wood, are fed by the faithful Walter with a roast-chicken,

over which he has just before, in his agitation, upset the salt-box.

When she used to play the part of the Little Son to Mrs. Porter's Isabella.

See Crabb Robinson's version of this anecdote (*Diaries*, iii. 19). —"She (Miss Kelly) related that when, as Constance, Mrs. Siddons wept over her, her collar was wet with Mrs. Siddons's tears."

THE TOMBS IN THE ABBEY

("London Magazine," October 1823)

THE concluding paragraphs of Lamb's letter to Southey, remonstrating with him for his remarks upon certain characteristics of Lamb's writings. The *Quarterly Review* for January 1823 contained an article by Southey on Bishop Gregoire and the spread of the Theo-philanthropists in France. The first series of Elia was then on the point of being published in book form, and Southey thought to do the book a good turn by paying it an incidental compliment. Having to deal with the spread of free-thought in England, Southey went on to say that unbelief might rob men of hope, but could not banish their fears. "There is a remarkable proof of this," he added, "in Elia's essays, a book which wants only a sounder religious feeling, to be as delightful as it is original," and proceeded to quote from the essay on *Witches and other Night Fears* Lamb's account of the nervous terrors of "dear little T. H."—known to be Thornton Hunt, Leigh Hunt's eldest boy. The moral drawn by Southey may be easily guessed. These nervous terrors were the natural result of the absence of definite Christian teaching in the systems of Leigh Hunt and others of the Radical set.

Lamb was hurt by the attack on himself, but still more by

the reflections on his friends; and the greater part of his letter is employed in defending Leigh Hunt and William Hazlitt. The breach with Southey was soon healed, and the old affectionate intercourse renewed. If only for this reason, it is intelligible why Lamb did not care to reproduce the entire letter when he published the *Last Essays of Elia* in a collected form. I have dealt with the subject at some length in my memoir of Lamb.

AMICUS REDIVIVUS

("London Magazine," December 1823)

FOR an account of G. D.—George Dyer—see notes to the essay, *Oxford in the Vacation*. The incident had actually occurred a few weeks only before the date of this essay. Mr. Procter supplements the account here given with some amusing particulars:—"I happened to go to Lamb's house, about an hour after his rescue and restoration to dry land, and met Miss Lamb in the passage in a state of great alarm; she was whimpering, and could only utter, 'Poor Mr. Dyer! Poor Mr. Dyer!' in tremulous tones. I went upstairs, aghast, and found that the involuntary diver had been placed in bed, and that Miss Lamb had administered brandy and water, as a well-established preventive against cold. Dyer, unaccustomed to anything stronger than the 'crystal spring,' was sitting upright in the bed perfectly delirious. His hair had been rubbed up, and stood out like so many needles of iron-gray. 'I soon found out where I was,' he cried out to me, laughing; and then he went wandering on, his words taking flight into regions where no one could follow."

And could such spacious virtue find a grave.

Lamb had headed this essay with an appropriate quotation

from Milton's *Lycidas*. He now cites a less famous poem from the collection of tributary verse in which *Lycidas* made its first appearance—the little volume of *Elegies* on the death of Edward King, published at Cambridge in 1638. The couplet here quoted is from the contribution to this volume by John Cleveland, the Cavalier. It runs thus in the original:—

> "But can his spacious vertue find a grave
> Within th' imposthumed bubble of a wave."

The sweet lyrist of Peter House.
The poet Gray.

The mild Askew.
Anthony Askew, M.D.—See *Dyer's Poems*, 1801, p. 156 (note):—"Dr. Anthony Askew, formerly a physician in London, once of Emmanuel College, well known in this and foreign countries for his acquaintance with Greek literature, and his valuable collection of Greek books and MSS.; a particular friend and patron of the author's early youth."

SOME SONNETS OF SIR PHILIP SYDNEY

("London Magazine," September 1823)

IN the year 1820 William Hazlitt delivered a course of lectures at the Surrey Institution on the Literature of the Age of Elizabeth. In the sixth lecture of the course he dealt, among other writers, with Sidney, on whose *Arcadia* he made an elaborate onslaught. "It is to me," he says, "one of the greatest monuments of the abuse of intellectual power upon record. It puts one in mind of the Court dresses and preposterous fashions of the time, which are grown obsolete and disgusting. It is not romantic, but scholastic; not poetry, but casuistry; not nature, but art, and the worst sort of art,

which thinks it can do better than nature. Of the number of fine things that are constantly passing through the author's mind, there is hardly one that he has not contrived to spoil, and to spoil purposely and maliciously, in order to aggrandise our idea of himself"—with much more in the same strain. In the course of his remarks he describes the sonnets inlaid in the *Arcadia* as "jejune, far-fetched, and frigid," the very words cited by Lamb in his essay; and it is clear that Hazlitt's lecture was the immediate cause of the present paper.

It is a lesson of high value to contrast Lamb's and Hazlitt's estimate of Sidney. Hazlitt possessed acuteness, wide reading, and had command of an excellent style, but he was (through political bias, among other causes, as Lamb suggests) out of sympathy with his subject. Moreover, Lamb was a poet. His few sentences beginning, "But they are not rich in words only," are truer and more satisfying than the whole of Hazlitt's minute analysis.

I am afraid some of his addresses ("ad Leonoram" I mean) have rather erred on the other side.

Cowper translated most of Milton's Latin poems in skilful imitation of the Miltonic verse. It is significant that he "drew the line" at this exorbitant piece of flattery, which remains untranslated by him.

Lord Oxford.

The "foolish nobleman," just before mentioned. Sidney was grossly insulted by the young earl in a tennis-court, where they had met for play. According to Fulke Greville, the earl called Sidney "a puppy"—the "opprobrious thing" alluded to by Lamb. It is worth noting that two centuries later another earl (Horace Walpole) made an equally memorable and insolent attack upon Sidney. See the notice of Fulke Greville in Walpole's *Royal and Noble Authors.*

There is a touching incident associating Lamb's last days with those of Sidney. The last letter written by Lamb before the fatal issue of his accident was to Mrs. George Dyer, concerning the safety of a certain book belonging to Mr. Cary of the British Museum, which Lamb had left by accident at her house. The book was the *Theatrum Poetarum* of Edward Phillips, Milton's nephew. On the recovery of the volume it was found that the page was turned down at the notice of Philip Sidney. It was on this incident that Cary wrote his touching lines:—

> "So should it be, my gentle friend;
> Thy leaf last closed at Sidney's end.
> Thou too, like Sidney, would'st have given
> The water, thirsting, and near Heaven;
> Nay, were it wine, fill'd to the brim,
> Thou hadst looked hard—but given, like him."

NEWSPAPERS THIRTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

("Englishman's Magazine," October 1831)

THE title of this essay was first given to it when it appeared in the *Last Essays of Elia* in 1833. The date, therefore, to which it refers is the year 1798, or thereabouts. Lamb's connection with the newspaper world began even earlier than this. He seems to have owed his first introduction to it to Coleridge, who published some of his own earliest verse in the columns of the *Morning Chronicle*. Coleridge was contributing sonnets to this paper as early as the year 1794, and among them appeared Lamb's sonnet (perhaps a joint composition with his friend) on Mrs. Siddons. After this period, until Coleridge's return from Germany at the end of 1799, we have no means of tracing Lamb's hand in the newspapers; but from 1800 to 1803 frequent mention is made in

Lamb's correspondence of his employment in the capacity described in this essay. It was his time of greatest poverty and struggle, when the addition of an extra fifty pounds a year to his income was of the greatest importance. Coleridge appears to have introduced Lamb to Daniel Stuart, the editor of the *Morning Post*. He was writing in the same year for the *Albion*, the final collapse of which, by the help of Lamb's epigram, is here described. "The *Albion* is dead," he writes to Manning on this occasion, "dead as nail in door—my revenues have died with it; but I am not as a man without hope." He had now got an introduction, through his friend George Dyer, to the *Morning Chronicle*, under the editorship of Perry. In 1802 he was trying an entirely new line of writing in the *Morning Post*—turning into verse prose translations of German poems supplied by Coleridge. A specimen of Lamb's work of this kind has been preserved—Thekla's song in *Wallenstein*. "As to the translations," he writes to Coleridge, "let me do two or three hundred lines, and then do you try the nostrums upon Stuart in any way you please." His connection with the newspapers came to an end in 1803. "I have given up two guineas a week at the *Post*," he writes to Manning, "and regained my health and spirits, which were upon the wane. I grew sick, and Stuart unsatisfied. *Lusisti satis, tempus abire est.* I must cut closer, that 's all."

Daniel Stuart—who lived till 1846—published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for June 1838 an account of his dealings with Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Lamb. It is amusing to hear the other side of the story. He says, "As for good Charles Lamb, I could never make anything of his writings. Coleridge repeatedly pressed me to settle him on a salary, but it would not do. Of politics he knew nothing; and his drollery was vapid when given in short paragraphs for a newspaper." Certainly no style was ever less fitted for journalism, in any department, than Lamb's.

NOTES

With holy reverence, etc.
From Armstrong's "Art of preserving Health," 1744.

> "With holy reverence I approach the rocks
> Whence glide the streams renowned in ancient song."

Bob Allen—our quondam schoolfellow.
He was a Grecian at Christ's Hospital in Lamb's time. See the story of him, and his handsome face, in the essay on the *Blue Coat School.*

John Fenwick.
The Ralph Bigod of the essay, *The Two Races of Men.*

An unlucky, or rather lucky, epigram from our pen.
The alleged apostasy of Sir James Mackintosh consisted in his having accepted, at the hands of Mr. Addington, the office of Recorder of Bombay in 1804. His *Vindiciæ Gallicæ* were published in 1791. Lamb's epigram was the following:—

> "Though thou'rt like Judas, an apostate black,
> In the resemblance one thing dost thou lack;
> When he had gotten his ill-purchased pelf,
> He went away, and wisely hang'd himself;
> This thou may do at last, yet much I doubt
> If thou hast any bowels to gush out!"

BARRENNESS OF THE IMAGINATIVE FACULTY IN THE PRODUCTIONS OF MODERN ART

("The Athenæum," January and February 1833)

APROPOS of what Lamb writes in this essay on the Titian in the National Gallery, it is not unamusing to find the following sentence in a letter to Wordsworth of May 1833:—

"Thank you for your cordial reception of Elia. *Inter nos*, the 'Ariadne' is not a darling with me; several incongruous things are in it, but in the composition it served me as illustrative."

THE WEDDING

("London Magazine," June 1825)

SARAH BURNEY, the daughter of Admiral Burney, married her cousin John Payne in April 1821, and her father died in November of the same year. Her age was between twenty-seven and twenty-eight. This is the foundation of fact on which this idyllic little story is built up. In an unpublished letter of Lamb's to which I have had access, after informing his correspondent that Miss Kelly was the original of "Barbara S." he adds, "*The Wedding*, of course, was Sally Burney's." It is at least a curious coincidence that, when Lamb revised the essay for the *Last Essays of Elia*, he was himself looking forward to a bereavement strictly parallel to that of the old admiral. He and Mary were about to lose, by marriage, one who had been to them as an only child. Emma Isola married Mr. Moxon in July 1833. Lamb might indeed have said of himself, "He bears bravely up, but he does not come out with his flashes of wild wit so thick as formerly . . . the youthfulness of the house is flown." Did he perchance remember, as he quoted his favourite Marvell, that the poet was bidding good-bye to one who had been his pupil, as Emma Isola had been Lamb's? In the lines on Appleton House, Marvell predicts the marriage of Mary Fairfax—

> "While her glad parents most rejoice,
> And make their destiny their choice."

NOTES

REJOICINGS UPON THE NEW YEAR'S COMING OF AGE

("London Magazine," January 1823)

OLD CHINA

("London Magazine," March 1823)

THIS beautiful essay tells its own story—this time, we may be sure, without romance or exaggeration of any kind. It is a contribution of singular interest to our understanding of the happier days of Charles and Mary's united life.

Dancing the hays.

The hays was an old English dance, involving some intricate figures. It seems to have been known in England up to fifty years ago. The dance is often referred to in the writers whom Lamb most loved. Herrick, for example, has—

> "On holy-dayes, when Virgins meet
> To dance the Heyes, with nimble feet."

THE CHILD ANGEL; A DREAM

("London Magazine," June 1823)

THOMAS MOORE'S *Loves of the Angels* had appeared in the year 1823. Lamb, as we may well believe, was not in general attracted to this poet, but there were reasons why this particular poem may have been an exception to the rule. It was based upon the translation in the Septuagint of the second verse in the sixth chapter of Genesis—"Angels of God" instead of "Sons of God." "In addition to the fitness of the subject for poetry," Moore writes in his preface, "it

struck me also as capable of affording an allegorical medium, through which might be shadowed out the fall of the soul from its original purity—the loss of light and happiness which it suffers in the pursuit of this world's perishable pleasures—and the punishments, both from conscience and Divine justice, with which impurity, pride, and presumptuous inquiry into the awful secrets of God are sure to be visited." This vein of thought had a strange fascination for Lamb, as we know from his reflections in *New Year's Eve*, and his beautiful sonnet on *Innocence*. The topic, in short, may have attracted him, rather than Moore's fluent verse and boudoir metaphysics. It may be doubted whether he meant his sequel to the poem to be in any sense an allegory. It is probably fantastic merely.

CONFESSIONS OF A DRUNKARD

("London Magazine," August 1822)

IN the year 1814 Basil Montagu compiled a volume of miscellaneous extracts on the subject of temperance, under the title *Some Enquiries into the Effects of Fermented Liquors. By a Water Drinker.* The contents were taken from the writings of physicians, divines, poets, essayists and others who had pleaded the temperance cause. The volume was arranged in sections, and to that headed *Do Fermented Liquors contribute to Moral Excellence?* Lamb furnished (of course anonymously) his *Confessions of a Drunkard.* It was illustrated by an outline engraving of the Correggio drawing so powerfully described in the essay. A second edition of the book appeared in 1818.

In the *Quarterly Review* for April 1822 appeared an article on Dr. Reid's treatise on *Hypochondriasis and other Nervous Affections.* These *Confessions of a Drunkard* were there re-

ferred to, as "a fearful picture of the consequences of intemperance," which the reviewer went on to say, "we have reason to know is a true tale." I may be allowed to finish the story in words used by me elsewhere. "In order to give the author the opportunity of contradicting this statement, the paper was reprinted in the *London* in the following August, under the signature of Elia. To it were appended a few words of remonstrance with the *Quarterly* reviewer for assuming the literal truthfulness of these confessions, but accompanied with certain significant admissions that showed Lamb had no right to be seriously indignant. 'It is indeed,' he writes, 'a compound extracted out of his long observation of the effects of drinking upon all the world about him; and this accumulated mass of misery he hath centered (as the custom is with judicious essayists) in a single figure. We deny not that a portion of his own experiences may have passed into the picture (as who, that is not a washy fellow, but must at some time have felt the after-operation of a too generous cup?); but then how heightened! how exaggerated! how little within the sense of the review, when a part in their slanderous usage must be understood to stand for the whole.' The truth is that Lamb, in writing his tract, had been playing with edge-tools, and could hardly have complained if they turned against himself. It would be those who knew Lamb, or at least the circumstances of his life, best, who would be most likely to accept these confessions as true." There is, in short, a thread of fact running through this paper, though with exaggerations and additions in abundance. The reference to the excessive indulgence in smoking we have too good a reason for accepting as genuine. When some one watched him persistently emit dense volumes of smoke during the greater part of an evening, and asked him how he had contrived to do it, he answered, "I toiled after it, sir, as some men toil after virtue." Compare his *Ode to Tobacco.*

NOTES

—and not undo 'em
To suffer wet damnation to run thro' 'em.

From the *Revenger's Tragedy*, by Cyril Tourneur. Vindici is addressing the skull of his dead lady:—

"Here's an eye,
Able to tempt a great man—to serve God;
A pretty hanging lip, that has forgot how to dissemble.
Methinks this mouth should make a swearer tremble;
A drunkard clasp his teeth, and not undo 'em,
To suffer wet damnation to run through 'em."

POPULAR FALLACIES

("The New Monthly Magazine," Jan. to Sept. 1826)

LAMB writes to Wordsworth in 1833, when the volume was newly out:—"I want you in the *Popular Fallacies* to like the 'home that is no home,' and 'rising with the lark.'" The former of these naturally interested Lamb deeply, for it contains a hardly-disguised account of his own struggles with the crowd of loungers and good-natured friends who intruded on his leisure hours, and hindered his reading and writing. There is little to call for a note in these papers. The pun of Swift's criticised—with rare acumen—in the Fallacy, "that the worst puns are the best," was on a lady's mantua dragging to the ground a Cremona violin. Swift is said to have quoted Virgil's line—

"Mantua væ miseræ nimium vicina Cremonæ."

It has been prettily said that "a babe is fed with milk and praise."

By Mary Lamb, in the poem called "The First Tooth," in *Poetry for Children.*

MRS. LEICESTER'S SCHOOL
OR THE HISTORY OF SEVERAL YOUNG LADIES
RELATED BY THEMSELVES

DEDICATION

TO THE YOUNG LADIES AT AMWELL SCHOOL

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,—Though released from the business of the school, the absence of your governess confines me to Amwell during the vacation. I cannot better employ my leisure hours than in contributing to the amusement of you, my kind pupils, who, by your affectionate attentions to my instructions, have rendered a life of labour pleasant to me.

On your return to school I hope to have a fair copy, ready to present to each of you, of your own biographical conversations last winter.

Accept my thanks for the approbation you were pleased to express when I offered to become your amanuensis. I hope you will find I have executed the office with a tolerably faithful pen, as you know I took notes each day during those conversations, and arranged my materials after you were retired to rest.

I begin from the day our school commenced. It was opened by your governess for the first time on the —— day of February. I pass over your several arrivals on the morning of that day. Your governess received you from your friends in her own parlour.

Every carriage that drove from the door I knew had left a sad heart behind. Your eyes were red with

weeping, when your governess introduced me to you as the teacher she had engaged to instruct you. She next desired me to show you into the room which we now call the playroom. "The ladies," said she, "may play and amuse themselves, and be as happy as they please this evening, that they may be well acquainted with each other before they enter the schoolroom to-morrow morning."

The traces of tears were on every cheek, and I also was sad; for I, like you, had parted from my friends, and the duties of my profession were new to me, yet I felt that it was improper to give way to my own melancholy thoughts. I knew that it was my first duty to divert the solitary young strangers; for I considered that this was very unlike the entrance to an old-established school, where there is always some good-natured girl who will show attentions to a new scholar, and take pleasure in initiating her into the customs and amusements of the place. These, thought I, have their own amusements to invent; their own customs to establish. How unlike, too, is this forlorn meeting to old schoolfellows returning after the holidays, when mutual greetings soon lighten the memory of parting sorrow.

I invited you to draw near a bright fire which blazed in the chimney, and looked the only cheerful thing in the room.

During our first solemn silence, which, you may remember, was only broken by my repeated requests that you would make a smaller and still smaller

circle, till I saw the fireplace fairly enclosed round, the idea came into my mind, which has since been a source of amusement to you in the recollection, and to myself in particular has been of essential benefit, as it enabled me to form a just estimate of the dispositions of you, my young pupils, and assisted me to adopt my plan of future instructions to each individual temper.

An introduction to a point we wish to carry, we always feel to be an awkward affair, and generally execute it in an awkward manner; so I believe I did then; for when I imparted this idea to you, I think I prefaced it rather too formally for such young auditors; for I began with telling you that I had read in old authors, that it was not unfrequent in former times, when strangers were assembled together, as we might be, for them to amuse themselves with telling stories—either of their own lives, or the adventures of others. "Will you allow me, ladies," I continued, "to persuade you to amuse yourselves in this way? You will not then look so unsociably upon each other; for we find that these strangers, of whom we read, were as well acquainted before the conclusion of the first story as if they had known each other many years. Let me prevail upon you to relate some little anecdotes of your own lives. Fictitious tales we can read in books, and they were therefore better adapted to conversation in those times when books of amusement were more scarce than they are at present."

After many objections of not knowing what to say or how to begin, which I overcame by assuring you how easy it would be, for that every person is naturally eloquent when they are the hero or heroine of their own tale;—the *Who should begin?* was next in question.

I proposed to draw lots, which formed a little amusement of itself. Miss Manners, who till then had been the saddest of the sad, began to brighten, and said it was just like drawing king and queen; and began to tell us where she passed last Twelfth-day; but as her narration must have interfered with the more important business of the lottery, I advised her to postpone it till it came to her turn to favour us with the history of her life, when it would appear in its proper order. The first number fell to the share of Miss Villiers, whose joy at drawing what we called the *first prize* was tempered with shame at appearing as the first historian in the company. She wished she had not been the very first:—she had passed all her life in a retired village, and had nothing to relate of herself that could give the least entertainment; she had not the least idea in the world where to begin.

"Begin," said I, "with your name, for that at present is unknown to us. Tell us the first thing you can remember; relate whatever happened to make a great impression on you when you were very young; and if you find you can connect your story till your arrival here to-day, I am sure we shall

listen to you with pleasure; and if you like to break off, and only treat us with a part of your history, we will excuse you, with many thanks for the amusement which you have afforded us; and the young lady who has drawn the second number will, I hope, take her turn with the same indulgence, to relate either all, or any part of the events of her life, as best pleases her own fancy, or as she finds she can manage it with the most ease to herself." Encouraged by this offer of indulgence, Miss Villiers began.

If in my report of her story, or in any which follow, I shall appear to make her or you speak an older language than it seems probable that you should use, speaking in your own words, it must be remembered that what is very proper and becoming when spoken, requires to be arranged with some little difference before it can be set down in writing. Little inaccuracies must be pared away, and the whole must assume a more formal and correct appearance. My own way of thinking, I am sensible, will too often intrude itself; but I have endeavoured to preserve, as exactly as I could, your own words and your own peculiarities of style and manner, and to approve myself

Your faithful historiographer,
as well as true friend,
M. B.

ELIZABETH VILLIERS

MY father is the curate of a village church about five miles from Amwell. I was born in the parsonage-house, which joins the churchyard. The first thing I can remember was my father teaching me the alphabet from the letters on a tombstone that stood at the head of my mother's grave. I used to tap at my father's study door; I think I now hear him say, "Who is there?—What do you want, little girl?" "Go and see mamma. Go and learn pretty letters." Many times in the day would my father lay aside his books and his papers to lead me to this spot, and make me point to the letters, and then set me to spell syllables and words: in this manner, the epitaph on my mother's tomb being my primer and my spelling-book, I learned to read.

I was one day sitting on a step placed across the churchyard stile, when a gentleman, passing by, heard me distinctly repeat the letters which formed my mother's name, and then say *Elizabeth Villiers*, with a firm tone, as if I had performed some great matter. This gentleman was my uncle James, my mother's brother; he was a lieutenant in the Navy, and had left England a few weeks after the marriage of my father and mother, and now, returned home from a long sea-voyage, he was coming to visit my mother —no tidings of her decease having reached him, though she had been dead more than a twelvemonth.

When my uncle saw me sitting on the stile, and heard me pronounce my mother's name, he looked earnestly in my face, and began to fancy a resemblance to his sister, and to think I might be her child. I was too intent on my employment to observe him, and went spelling on. "Who has taught you to spell so prettily, my little maid?" said my uncle. "Mamma," I replied; for I had an idea that the words on the tombstone were somehow a part of mamma, and that she had taught me. "And who is mamma?" asked my uncle. "Elizabeth Villiers," I replied; and then my uncle called me his dear little niece, and said he would go with me to mamma; he took hold of my hand, intending to lead me home, delighted that he had found out who I was, because he imagined it would be such a pleasant surprise to his sister to see her little daughter bringing home her long-lost sailor uncle.

I agreed to take him to mamma, but we had a dispute about the way thither. My uncle was for going along the road which led directly up to our house; I pointed to the churchyard, and said that was the way to mamma. Though impatient of any delay, he was not willing to contest the point with his new relation; therefore he lifted me over the stile, and was then going to take me along the path to a gate he knew was at the end of our garden; but no, I would not go that way neither; letting go his hand, I said, "You do not know the way,—I will show you"; and making what haste I could among

the long grass and thistles, and jumping over the low graves, he said, as he followed what he called my *wayward steps*, "What a positive soul this little niece of mine is! I knew the way to your mother's house before you were born, child." At last I stopped at my mother's grave, and pointing to the tombstone said, "Here is mamma!" in a voice of exultation, as if I had now convinced him that I knew the way best. I looked up in his face to see him acknowledge his mistake; but oh! what a face of sorrow did I see! I was so frightened, that I have but an imperfect recollection of what followed. I remember I pulled his coat, and cried "Sir, sir!" and tried to move him. I knew not what to do. My mind was in a strange confusion; I thought I had done something wrong in bringing the gentleman to mamma, to make him cry so sadly; but what it was I could not tell. This grave had always been a scene of delight to me. In the house my father would often be weary of my prattle, and send me from him; but here he was all my own. I might say anything, and be as frolicsome as I pleased here; all was cheerfulness and good-humour in our visits to mamma, as we called it. My father would tell me how quietly mamma slept there, and that he and his little Betsy would one day sleep beside mamma in that grave; and when I went to bed, as I laid my little head on the pillow, I used to wish I was sleeping in the grave with my papa and mamma; and in my childish dreams I used to fancy myself there;

and it was a place within the ground, all smooth, and soft, and green. I never made out any figure of mamma, but still it was the tombstone, and papa, and the smooth green grass, and my head resting upon the elbow of my father.

How long my uncle remained in this agony of grief I know not—to me it seemed a very long time; at last he took me in his arms, and held me so tight that I began to cry, and ran home to my father and told him that a gentleman was crying about mamma's pretty letters.

No doubt it was a very affecting meeting between my father and my uncle. I remember that it was the very first day I ever saw my father weep—that I was in sad trouble, and went into the kitchen and told Susan, our servant, that papa was crying; and she wanted to keep me with her, that I might not disturb the conversation; but I would go back to the parlour to *poor papa*, and I went in softly and crept between my father's knees. My uncle offered to take me in his arms, but I turned sullenly from him, and clung closer to my father, having conceived a dislike to my uncle because he had made my father cry.

Now I first learned that my mother's death was a heavy affliction; for I heard my father tell a melancholy story of her long illness, her death, and what he had suffered from her loss. My uncle said what a sad thing it was for my father to be left with such a young child; but my father replied, his little Betsy was all his comfort, and that, but for me, he should

have died with grief. How I could be any comfort to my father, struck me with wonder. I knew I was pleased when he played and talked with me; but I thought that was all goodness and favour done to me, and I had no notion how I could make any part of his happiness. The sorrow I now heard he had suffered was as new and strange to me. I had no idea that he had ever been unhappy; his voice was always kind and cheerful; I had never before seen him weep, or show any such signs of grief as those in which I used to express my little troubles. My thoughts on these subjects were confused and childish; but from that time I never ceased pondering on the sad story of my dead mamma.

The next day I went, by mere habit, to the study door, to call papa to the beloved grave; my mind misgave me, and I could not tap at the door. I went backwards and forwards between the kitchen and the study, and what to do with myself I did not know. My uncle met me in the passage, and said, "Betsy, will you come and walk with me in the garden?" This I refused, for this was not what I wanted, but the old amusement of sitting on the grave and talking to papa. My uncle tried to persuade me, but still I said, "No, no," and ran crying into the kitchen. As he followed me in there, Susan said, "This child is so fretful to-day, I do not know what to do with her." "Ay," said my uncle, "I suppose my poor brother spoils her, having but one." This reflection on my papa made me quite in a

little passion of anger, for I had not forgot that with this new uncle sorrow had first come into our dwelling; I screamed loudly, till my father came out to know what it was all about. He sent my uncle into the parlour, and said he would manage the little wrangler by himself. When my uncle was gone I ceased crying; my father forgot to lecture me for my ill-humour, or to inquire into the cause, and we were soon seated by the side of the tombstone. No lesson went on that day; no talking of pretty mamma sleeping in the green grave; no jumping from the tombstone to the ground; no merry jokes or pleasant stories. I sat upon my father's knee, looking up in his face and thinking, "*How sorry papa looks*," till having been fatigued with crying, and now oppressed with thought, I fell fast asleep.

My uncle soon learned from Susan that this place was our constant haunt; she told him she did verily believe her master would never get the better of the death of her mistress while he continued to teach the child to read at the tombstone; for though it might soothe his grief, it kept it for ever fresh in his memory. The sight of his sister's grave had been such a shock to my uncle, that he readily entered into Susan's apprehensions; and concluding that if I were set to study by some other means, there would no longer be a pretence for these visits to the grave, away my kind uncle hastened to the nearest market-town to buy me some books.

I heard the conference between my uncle and

Susan, and I did not approve of his interfering in our pleasure. I saw him take his hat and walk out, and I secretly hoped he was gone *beyond seas again*, from whence Susan had told me he had come. Where *beyond seas* was, I could not tell; but I concluded it was somewhere a great way off. I took my seat on the churchyard stile, and kept looking down the road, and saying, "I hope I shall not see my uncle again. I hope my uncle will not come from *beyond seas* any more"; but I said this very softly, and had a kind of notion that I was in a perverse ill-humoured fit. Here I sat till my uncle returned from the market-town with his new purchases. I saw him come walking very fast, with a parcel under his arm. I was very sorry to see him, and I frowned and tried to look very cross. He untied his parcel, and said, "Betsy, I have brought you a pretty book." I turned my head away, and said, "I don't want a book"; but I could not help peeping again to look at it. In the hurry of opening the parcel, he had scattered all the books upon the ground, and there I saw fine gilt covers and gay pictures all fluttering about. What a fine sight! All my resentment vanished, and I held up my face to kiss him, that being my way of thanking my father for any extraordinary favour.

My uncle had brought himself into rather a troublesome office; he had heard me spell so well, that he thought there was nothing to do but to put books into my hand and I should read; yet not-

withstanding I spelt tolerably well, the letters in my new library were so much smaller than I had been accustomed to; they were like Greek characters to me; I could make nothing at all of them. The honest sailor was not to be discouraged by this difficulty; though unused to play the schoolmaster, he taught me to read the small print with unwearied diligence and patience; and whenever he saw my father and me look as if we wanted to resume our visits to the grave, he would propose some pleasant walk; and if my father said it was too far for the child to walk, he would set me on his shoulder and say, "Then Betsy shall ride!" and in this manner has he carried me many, many miles.

In these pleasant excursions my uncle seldom forgot to make Susan furnish him with a luncheon, which, though it generally happened every day, made a constant surprise to my papa and me, when, seated under some shady tree, he pulled it out of his pocket, and began to distribute his little store; and then I used to peep into the other pocket, to see if there were not some currant wine there, and the little bottle of water for me; if, perchance, the water was forgot, then it made another joke,—that poor Betsy must be forced to drink a little drop of wine. These are childish things to tell of; and, instead of my own silly history, I wish I could remember the entertaining stories my uncle used to relate of his voyages and travels, while we sat under the shady trees eating our noontide meal.

The long visit my uncle made us was such an important event in my life, that I fear I shall tire your patience with talking of him; but when he is gone, the remainder of my story will be but short.

The summer months passed away, but not swiftly; —the pleasant walks and the charming stories of my uncle's adventures made them seem like years to me. I remember the approach of winter by the warm greatcoat he bought for me, and how proud I was when I first put it on; and that he called me Little Red Riding Hood, and bade me beware of wolves; and that I laughed, and said there were no such things now; then he told me how many wolves, and bears, and tigers, and lions he had met with in uninhabited lands that were like Robinson Crusoe's island. Oh, these were happy days!

In the winter our walks were shorter and less frequent. My books were now my chief amusement, though my studies were often interrupted by a game of romps with my uncle, which too often ended in a quarrel, because he played so roughly; yet long before this I dearly loved my uncle, and the improvement I made while he was with us was very great indeed. I could now read very well, and the continual habit of listening to the conversation of my father and my uncle made me a little woman in understanding; so that my father said to him, "James, you have made my child quite a companionable little being!"

My father often left me alone with my uncle;

sometimes to write his sermons; sometimes to visit the sick, or give counsel to his poor neighbours; then my uncle used to hold long conversations with me, telling me how I should strive to make my father happy, and endeavour to improve myself when he was gone. Now I began justly to understand why he had taken such pains to keep my father from visiting my mother's grave,—that grave which I often stole privately to look at; but now never without awe and reverence, for my uncle used to tell me what an excellent lady my mother was; and I now thought of her as having been a real mamma, which before seemed an ideal something, no way connected with life. And he told me that the ladies from the Manor-house, who sat in the best pew in the church, were not so graceful, and the best women in the village were not so good, as was my sweet mamma; and that if she had lived, I should not have been forced to pick up a little knowledge from him, a rough sailor, or to learn to knit and sew of Susan, but that she would have taught me all ladylike fine works, and delicate behaviour, and perfect manners, and would have selected for me proper books, such as were most fit to instruct my mind, and of which he nothing knew. If ever in my life I shall have any proper sense of what is excellent or becoming in the womanly character, I owe it to these lessons of my rough unpolished uncle; for, in telling me what my mother would have made me, he taught me what to wish to be; and when, soon

after my uncle left us, I was introduced to the ladies at the Manor-house, instead of hanging down my head with shame, as I should have done before my uncle came, like a little village rustic, I tried to speak distinctly, with ease and a modest gentleness, as my uncle had said my mother used to do; instead of hanging down my head abashed, I looked upon them, and thought what a pretty sight a fine lady was, and how well my mother must have appeared, since she was so much more graceful than these high ladies were; and when I heard them compliment my father on the admirable behaviour of his child, and say how well he had brought me up, I thought to myself, "Papa does not much mind my manners, if I am but a good girl; but it was my uncle that taught me to behave like mamma." I cannot now think my uncle was so rough and unpolished as he said he was, for his lessons were so good and so impressive that I shall never forget them, and I hope they will be of use to me as long as I live. He would explain to me the meaning of all the words he used, such as grace and elegance, modest diffidence and affectation, pointing out instances of what he meant by those words, in the manners of the ladies and their young daughters who came to our church; for, besides the ladies of the Manor-house, many of the neighbouring families came to our church, because my father preached so well.

It must have been early in the spring when my uncle went away, for the crocuses were just blown

in the garden, and the primroses had begun to peep from under the young budding hedgerows. I cried as if my heart would break, when I had the last sight of him through a little opening among the trees as he went down the road. My father accompanied him to the market-town, from whence he was to proceed in the stage-coach to London. How tedious I thought all Susan's endeavours to comfort me were. The stile where I first saw my uncle came into my mind, and I thought I would go and sit there, and think about that day; but I was no sooner seated there, than I remembered how I had frightened him by taking him so foolishly to my mother's grave, and then again how naughty I had been when I sat muttering to myself at this same stile, wishing that he who had gone so far to buy me books might never come back any more; all my little quarrels with my uncle came into my mind now that I could never play with him again, and it almost broke my heart. I was forced to run into the house to Susan for that consolation I had just before despised.

Some days after this, as I was sitting by the fire with my father, after it was dark, and before the candles were lighted, I gave him an account of my troubled conscience at the church-stile, when I remembered how unkind I had been to my uncle when he first came, and how sorry I still was whenever I thought of the many quarrels I had had with him.

My father smiled, and took hold of my hand, say-

ing, "I will tell you all about this, my little penitent. This is the sort of way in which we all feel when those we love are taken from us. When our dear friends are with us, we go on enjoying their society, without much thought or consideration of the blessing we are possessed of, nor do we too nicely weigh the measure of our daily actions—we let them freely share our kind or our discontented moods; and, if any little bickerings disturb our friendship, it does but the more endear us to each other when we are in a happier temper. But these things come over us like grievous faults when the object of our affection is gone for ever. Your dear mamma and I had no quarrels; yet in the first days of my lonely sorrow how many things came into my mind that I might have done to have made her happier. It is so with you, my child. You did all a child could do to please your uncle, and dearly did he love you; and these little things which now disturb your tender mind, were remembered with delight by your uncle; he was telling me in our last walk, just perhaps as you were thinking about it with sorrow, of the difficulty he had in getting into your good graces when he first came; he will think of these things with pleasure when he is far away. Put away from you this unfounded grief; only let it be a lesson to you to be as kind as possible to those you love; and remember, when they are gone from you, you will never think you had been kind enough. Such feelings as you have now described

are the lot of humanity. So you will feel when I am no more, and so will your children feel when you are dead. But your uncle will come back again, Betsy, and we will now think of where we are to get the cage to keep the talking parrot in, he is to bring home; and go and tell Susan to bring the candles, and ask her if the nice cake is almost baked that she promised to give us for our tea."

At this point, my dear Miss Villiers, you thought fit to break off your story, and the wet eyes of your young auditors seemed to confess that you had succeeded in moving their feelings with your pretty narrative. It now fell by lot to the turn of Miss Manners to relate her story, and we were all sufficiently curious to know what so very young an historian had to tell of herself. I shall continue the narratives for the future in the order in which they followed, without mentioning any of the interruptions which occurred from the asking of questions, or from any other cause, unless materially connected with the stories. I shall also leave out the apologies with which you severally thought fit to preface your stories of yourselves, though they were very seasonable in their place, and proceeded from a proper diffidence, because I must not swell my work to too large a size.

THE FARMHOUSE

LOUISA MANNERS

MY name is Louisa Manners; I was seven years of age last birthday, which was on the first of May. I remember only four birthdays. The day I was four years old was the first that I recollect. On the morning of that day, as soon as I awoke, I crept into mamma's bed, and said, "Open your eyes, mamma, for it is my birthday. Open your eyes and look at me!" Then mamma told me I should ride in a post-chaise, and see my grandmamma and my sister Sarah. Grandmamma lived at a farmhouse in the country, and I had never in all my life been out of London; no, nor had I ever seen a bit of green grass, except in the Drapers' Garden, which is near my papa's house in Broad Street; nor had I ever rode in a carriage before that happy birthday.

I ran about the house talking of where I was going, and rejoicing so that it was my birthday, that when I got into the chaise I was tired, and fell asleep.

When I awoke, I saw the green fields on both sides of the chaise, and the fields were full, quite full, of bright shining yellow flowers, and sheep and young lambs were feeding in them. I jumped, and clapped my hands together for joy, and I cried out, "This is

"Abroad in the meadows to see the young lambs,"

for I knew many of Watts's hymns by heart.

The trees and hedges seemed to fly swiftly by us, and one field, and the sheep, and the young lambs, passed away; and then another field came, and that was full of cows; and then another field, and all the pretty sheep returned; and there was no end of these charming sights till we came quite to grandmamma's house, which stood all alone by itself, no house to be seen at all near it.

Grandmamma was very glad to see me, and she was very sorry that I did not remember her, though I had been so fond of her when she was in town but a few months before. I was quite ashamed of my bad memory. My sister Sarah showed me all the beautiful places about grandmamma's house. She first took me into the farmyard, and I peeped into the barn; there I saw a man thrashing, and as he beat the corn with his flail, he made such a dreadful noise that I was frightened, and ran away; my sister persuaded me to return; she said Will Tasker was very good-natured; then I went back, and peeped at him again; but as I could not reconcile myself to the sound of his flail, or the sight of his black beard, we proceeded to see the rest of the farmyard.

There was no end to the curiosities that Sarah had to show me. There was the pond where the ducks were swimming, and the little wooden houses where the hens slept at night. The hens were feeding all over the yard, and the prettiest little chickens, they were feeding too, and little yellow ducklings that had a hen for their mamma. She was so frightened

if they went near the water! Grandmamma says a hen is not esteemed a very wise bird.

We went out of the farmyard into the orchard. Oh, what a sweet place grandmamma's orchard is! There were pear-trees, and apple-trees, and cherry-trees, all in blossom. These blossoms were the prettiest flowers that ever were seen; and among the grass under the trees there grew buttercups, and cowslips, and daffodils, and blue-bells. Sarah told me all their names, and she said I might pick as many of them as ever I pleased.

I filled my lap with flowers, I filled my bosom with flowers, and I carried as many flowers as I could in both my hands; but as I was going into the parlour to show them to my mamma, I stumbled over a threshold which was placed across the parlour, and down I fell with all my treasure.

Nothing could have so well pacified me for the misfortune of my fallen flowers as the sight of a delicious syllabub which happened at that moment to be brought in. Grandmamma said it was a present from the red cow to me because it was my birthday; and then, because it was the first of May, she ordered the syllabub to be placed under the May-bush that grew before the parlour-door, and when we were seated on the grass round it, she helped me the very first to a large glass full of the syllabub, and wished me many happy returns of that day, and then she said I was myself the sweetest little May-blossom in the orchard.

After the syllabub, there was the garden to see, and a most beautiful garden it was;—long and narrow, a straight gravel walk down the middle of it; at the end of the gravel walk there was a green arbour with a bench under it.

There were rows of cabbages and radishes, and pease and beans. I was delighted to see them, for I never saw so much as a cabbage growing out of the ground before.

On one side of this charming garden there were a great many beehives, and the bees sung so prettily.

Mamma said, "Have you nothing to say to these pretty bees, Louisa?" Then I said to them—

"How doth the little busy bee improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day from every opening flower."

They had a most beautiful flower-bed to gather it from, quite close under the hives.

I was going to catch one bee, till Sarah told me about their stings, which made me afraid for a long time to go too near their hives; but I went a little nearer, and a little nearer every day, and before I came away from grandmamma's, I grew so bold, I let Will Tasker hold me over the glass windows at the top of the hives, to see them make honey in their own home.

After seeing the garden, I saw the cows milked, and that was the last sight I saw that day; for while I was telling mamma about the cows, I fell fast asleep, and I suppose I was then put to bed.

The next morning my papa and mamma were gone. I cried sadly, but was a little comforted at hearing they would return in a month or two, and fetch me home. I was a foolish little thing then, and did not know how long a month was. Grandmamma gave me a little basket to gather my flowers in. I went into the orchard, and before I had half-filled my basket I forgot all my troubles.

The time I passed at my grandmamma's is always in my mind. Sometimes I think of the good-natured pied cow that would let me stroke her while the dairy-maid was milking her. Then I fancy myself running after the dairy-maid into the nice clean dairy, and see the pans full of milk and cream. Then I remember the wood-house; it had once been a large barn, but being grown old, the wood was kept there. My sister and I used to peep about among the faggots, to find the eggs the hens sometimes left there. Birds' nests we might not look for. Grandmamma was very angry once, when Will Tasker brought home a bird's nest full of pretty speckled eggs for me. She sent him back to the hedge with it again. She said the little birds would not sing any more if their eggs were taken away from them.

A hen, she said, was a hospitable bird, and always laid more eggs than she wanted, on purpose to give her mistress to make puddings and custards with.

I do not know which pleased grandmamma best, when we carried her home a lapful of eggs, or a few violets; for she was particularly fond of violets.

Violets were very scarce; we used to search very carefully for them every morning round by the orchard hedge, and Sarah used to carry a stick in her hand to beat away the nettles; for very frequently the hens left their eggs among the nettles. If we could find eggs and violets too, what happy children we were!

Every day I used to fill my basket with flowers, and for a long time I liked one pretty flower as well as another pretty flower; but Sarah was much wiser than me, and she taught me which to prefer.

Grandmamma's violets were certainly best of all, but they never went in the basket, being carried home, almost flower by flower, as soon as they were found, therefore blue-bells might be said to be the best, for the cowslips were all withered and gone before I learned the true value of flowers. The best blue-bells were those tinged with red; some were so very red that we called them red blue-bells, and these Sarah prized very highly indeed. Daffodils were so very plentiful, they were not thought worth gathering unless they were double ones; and buttercups I found were very poor flowers indeed, yet I would pick one now and then, because I knew they were the very same flowers that had delighted me so in the journey; for my papa had told me they were.

I was very careful to love best the flowers which Sarah praised most, yet sometimes, I confess, I have even picked a daisy, though I knew it was the very worst flower of all, because it reminded me of Lon-

don, and the Drapers' Garden; for, happy as I was at grandmamma's, I could not help sometimes thinking of my papa and mamma, and then I used to tell my sister all about London; how the houses stood all close to each other; what a pretty noise the coaches made; and what a great many people there were in the streets. After we had been talking on these subjects, we generally used to go into the old wood-house and play at being in London. We used to set up bits of wood for houses; our two dolls we called papa and mamma; in one corner we made a little garden with grass and daisies, and that was to be the Drapers' Garden. I would not have any other flowers here than daisies, because no other grew among the grass in the real Drapers' Garden. Before the time of hay-making came, it was very much talked of. Sarah told me what a merry time it would be, for she remembered everything which had happened for a year or more. She told me how nicely we should throw the hay about. I was very desirous, indeed, to see the hay made.

To be sure, nothing could be more pleasant than the day the orchard was mowed: the hay smelled so sweet, and we might toss it about as much as ever we pleased; but, dear me, we often wish for things that do not prove so happy as we expected; the hay, which was at first so green and smelled so sweet, became yellow and dry, and was carried away in a cart to feed the horses; and then, when it was all gone, and there was no more to play with, I

looked upon the naked ground, and perceived what we had lost in these few merry days. Ladies, would you believe it, every flower, blue-bells, daffodils, buttercups, daisies, all were cut off by the cruel scythe of the mower. No flower was to be seen at all, except here and there a short solitary daisy, that a week before one would not have looked at.

It was a grief, indeed, to me, to lose all my pretty flowers; yet when we are in great distress, there is always, I think, something which happens to comfort us; and so it happened now that gooseberries and currants were almost ripe, which was certainly a very pleasant prospect. Some of them began to turn red, and as we never disobeyed grandmamma, we used often to consult together, if it was likely she would permit us to eat them yet; then we would pick a few that looked the ripest, and run to ask her if she thought they were ripe enough to eat, and the uncertainty what her opinion would be made them doubly sweet if she gave us leave to eat them.

When the currants and gooseberries were quite ripe, grandmamma had a sheep-shearing. All the sheep stood under the trees to be sheared. They were brought out of the field by old Spot, the shepherd. I stood at the orchard-gate and saw him drive them all in. When they had cropped off all their wool, they looked very clean, and white, and pretty; but, poor things, they ran shivering about with cold, so that it was a pity to see them. Great preparations were making all day for the sheep-shearing supper.

Sarah said a sheep-shearing was not to be compared to a harvest-home, *that* was so much better, for that then the oven was quite full of plum-pudding, and the kitchen was very hot indeed with roasting beef; yet I can assure you there was no want at all of either roast-beef or plum-pudding at the sheep-shearing.

My sister and I were permitted to sit up till it was almost dark, to see the company at supper. They sat at a long oak table, which was finely carved, and as bright as a looking-glass.

I obtained a great deal of praise that day, because I replied so prettily when I was spoken to. My sister was more shy than me; never having lived in London was the reason of that. After the happiest day bed-time will come! We sat up late; but at last grandmamma sent us to bed; yet though we went to bed, we heard many charming songs sung; to be sure, we could not distinguish the words, which was a pity, but the sound of their voices was very loud, and very fine indeed.

The common supper that we had every night was very cheerful. Just before the men came out of the field, a large faggot was flung on the fire; the wood used to crackle and blaze, and smell delightfully; and then the crickets, for they loved the fire, they used to sing; and old Spot, the shepherd, who loved the fire as well as the crickets did, he used to take his place in the chimney corner; after the hottest day in summer, there old Spot used to sit. It was

a seat within the fireplace, quite under the chimney, and over his head the bacon hung.

When old Spot was seated, the milk was hung in a skillet over the fire, and then the men used to come and sit down at the long white table.

Pardon me, my dear Louisa, that I interrupted you here. You are a little woman now to what you were then; and I may say to you, that though I loved to hear you prattle of your early recollections, I thought I perceived some ladies present were rather weary of hearing so much of the visit to grandmamma. You may remember I asked you some questions concerning your papa and mamma, which led you to speak of your journey home; but your little town-bred head was so full of the pleasures of a country life, that you first made many apologies that you were unable to tell what happened during the harvest, as unfortunately you were fetched home the very day before it began.

ANN WITHERS

MY name you know is Withers, but as I once thought I was the daughter of Sir Edward and Lady Harriot Lesley, I shall speak of myself as Miss Lesley, and call Sir Edward and Lady Harriot my father and mother during the period I supposed them entitled to those beloved names. When I was

a little girl, it was the perpetual subject of my contemplation that I was an heiress, and the daughter of a baronet; that my mother was the Honourable Lady Harriot; that we had a nobler mansion, infinitely finer pleasure grounds, and equipages more splendid than any of the neighbouring families. Indeed, my good friends, having observed nothing of this error of mine in either of the lives which have hitherto been related, I am ashamed to confess what a proud child I once was. How it happened I cannot tell, for my father was esteemed the best bred man in the country, and the condescension and affability of my mother were universally spoken of.

"Oh, my dear friend," said Miss ——, "it was very natural indeed, if you supposed you possessed these advantages. We make no comparative figure in the county, and my father was originally a man of no consideration at all; and yet I can assure you, both he and mamma had a prodigious deal of trouble to break me off this infirmity when I was very young." —"And do reflect for a moment," said Miss Villiers, "from whence could proceed any pride in me—a poor curate's daughter;—at least any pride worth speaking of; for the difficulty my father had to make me feel myself on an equality with a miller's little daughter who visited me, did not seem an anecdote worth relating. My father, from his profession, is accustomed to look into these things, and whenever he has observed any tendency to this fault in me, and has made me sensible of my error, I, who am

rather a weak-spirited girl, have been so much distressed at his reproofs, that to restore me to my own good opinion he would make me sensible that pride is a defect inseparable from human nature; showing me, in our visits to the poorest labourers, how pride would, as he expressed it, 'prettily peep out from under their ragged garbs.' My father dearly loved the poor. In persons of a rank superior to our own humble one, I wanted not much assistance from my father's nice discernment to know that it existed there; and for these latter he would always claim that toleration from me, which he said he observed I was less willing to allow than to the former instances. 'We are told in Holy Writ,' he would say, 'that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Surely this is not meant alone to warn the affluent; it must also be understood as an expressive illustration, to instruct the lowly-fortuned man, that he should bear with those imperfections, inseparable from that dangerous prosperity from which he is happily exempt.' But we sadly interrupt your story."

"You are very kind, ladies, to speak with so much indulgence of my foible," said Miss Withers, and was going to proceed, when little Louisa Manners asked, "Pray, are not equipages carriages?"—"Yes, Miss Manners, an equipage is a carriage."—"Then I am sure if my papa had but one equipage I should be very proud; for once when my papa talked of

keeping a one-horse chaise, I never was so proud of anything in my life; I used to dream of riding in it, and imagine I saw my playfellows walking past me in the streets."

"Oh, my dear Miss Manners," replied Miss Withers, "Your young head might well run on a thing so new to you; but you have preached a useful lesson to me in your own pretty rambling story, which I shall not easily forget. When you were speaking with such delight of the pleasure the sight of a farmyard, an orchard, and a narrow slip of kitchen-garden gave you, and could for years preserve so lively the memory of one short ride, and that probably through a flat uninteresting country, I remembered how early I learned to disregard the face of Nature, unless she were decked in picturesque scenery; how wearisome our parks and grounds became to me, unless some improvements were going forward which I thought would attract notice; but those days are gone!"—I will now proceed in my story, and bring you acquainted with my real parents.

Alas! I am a changeling, substituted by my mother for the heiress of the Lesley family; it was for my sake she did this naughty deed; yet, since the truth has been known, it seems to me as if I had been the only sufferer by it; remembering no time when I was not Harriot Lesley, it seems as if the change had taken from me my birthright.

Lady Harriot had intended to nurse her child

herself; but being seized with a violent fever soon after its birth, she was not only unable to nurse it, but even to see it for several weeks. I was not quite a month old at this time, when my mother was hired to be Mrs. Lesley's nurse—she had once been a servant in the family—her husband was then at sea.

She had been nursing Miss Lesley a few days, when a girl who had the care of me brought me into the nursery to see my mother. It happened that she wanted something from her own home, which she despatched the girl to fetch, and desired her to leave me till her return. In her absence she changed our clothes; then keeping me to personate the child she was nursing, she sent away the daughter of Sir Edward to be brought up in her own poor cottage.

When my mother sent away the girl, she affirmed she had not the least intention of committing this bad action; but after she was left alone with us, she looked on me, and then on the little lady-babe, and she wept over me, to think she was obliged to leave me to the charge of a careless girl, debarred from my own natural food, while she was nursing another person's child.

The laced cap and the fine cambric robe of the little Harriot were lying on the table ready to be put on: in these she dressed me, only just to see how pretty her own dear baby would look in missy's fine clothes. When she saw me thus adorned, she said to me, "Oh, my dear Ann, you look as like Missy as anything can be. I am sure my lady her-

self, if she were well enough to see you, would not know the difference." She said these words aloud, and while she was speaking, a wicked thought came into her head—how easy it would be to change these children! On which she hastily dressed Harriot in my coarse raiment. She had no sooner finished the transformation of Miss Lesley into the poor Ann Withers, than the girl returned and carried her away, without the least suspicion that it was not the same infant that she had brought thither.

It was wonderful that no one discovered that I was not the same child. Every fresh face that came into the room filled the nurse with terror. The servants still continued to pay their compliments to the baby in the same form as usual, saying, how like it is to its papa! Nor did Sir Edward himself perceive the difference, his lady's illness probably engrossing all his attention at the time; though, indeed, gentlemen seldom take much notice of very young children.

When Lady Harriot began to recover, and the nurse saw me in her arms caressed as her own child, all fears of detection were over; but the pangs of remorse then seized her; as the dear sick lady hung with tears of fondness over me, she thought she should have died with sorrow for having so cruelly deceived her.

When I was a year old Mrs. Withers was discharged; and because she had been observed to nurse me with uncommon care and affection, and was seen

to shed many tears at parting from me, to reward her fidelity, Sir Edward settled a small pension on her, and she was allowed to come every Sunday to dine in the housekeeper's room, and see her little lady.

When she went home, it might have been expected she would have neglected the child she had so wickedly stolen; instead of which she nursed it with the greatest tenderness, being very sorry for what she had done; all the ease she could ever find for her troubled conscience, was in her extreme care of this injured child; and in the weekly visits to its father's house she constantly brought it with her. At the time I have the earliest recollection of her, she was become a widow, and with the pension Sir Edward allowed her, and some plain work she did for our family, she maintained herself and her supposed daughter. The doting fondness she showed for her child was much talked of; it was said she waited upon it more like a servant than a mother; and it was observed its clothes were always made, as far as her slender means would permit, in the same fashion, and her hair cut and curled in the same form as mine. To this person, as having been my faithful nurse, and to her child, I was always taught to show particular civility, and the little girl was always brought into the nursery to play with me. Ann was a little delicate thing, and remarkably well-behaved; for though so much indulged in every other respect, my mother was very attentive to her manners.

As the child grew older, my mother became very uneasy about her education. She was so very desirous of having her well-behaved, that she feared to send her to school, lest she should learn ill manners among the village children, with whom she never suffered her to play; and she was such a poor scholar herself, that she could teach her little or nothing. I heard her relate this her distress to my own maid, with tears in her eyes, and I formed a resolution to beg of my parents that I might have Ann for a companion, and that she might be allowed to take lessons with me of my governess.

My birthday was then approaching, and on that day I was always indulged in the privilege of asking some peculiar favour.

"And what boon has my annual petitioner to beg to-day?" said my father, as he entered the breakfast-room on the morning of my birthday. Then I told him of the great anxiety expressed by Nurse Withers concerning her daughter; how much she wished it was in her power to give her an education that would enable her to get her living without hard labour. I set the good qualities of Ann Withers in the best light I could, and in conclusion, I begged she might be permitted to partake with me in education, and become my companion. "This is a very serious request indeed, Harriot," said Sir Edward; "your mother and I must consult together on the subject." The result of this conversation was favourable to my wishes; in a few weeks my foster-sister

was taken into the house, and placed under the tuition of my governess.

To me, who had hitherto lived without any companions of my own age except occasional visitors, the idea of a playfellow constantly to associate with was very pleasant; and after the first shyness of feeling her altered situation was over, Ann seemed as much at her ease as if she had always been brought up in our house. I became very fond of her, and took pleasure in showing her all manner of attentions; which so far won on her affections, that she told me she had a secret intrusted to her by her mother, which she had promised never to reveal as long as her mother lived, but that she almost wished to confide it to me, because I was such a kind friend to her; yet, having promised never to tell it till the death of her mother, she was afraid to tell it to me. At first I assured her that I would never press her to the disclosure, for that promises of secrecy were to be held sacred; but whenever we fell into any confidential kind of conversation, this secret seemed always ready to come out. Whether she or I were most to blame, I know not, though I own I could not help giving frequent hints how well I could keep a secret. At length she told me what I have before related, namely, that she was in truth the daughter of Sir Edward and Lady Lesley, and I the child of her supposed mother.

When I was first in possession of this wonderful secret, my heart burned to reveal it. I thought how

praiseworthy it would be in me to restore to my friend the rights of her birth; yet I thought only of becoming her patroness, and raising her to her proper rank; it never occurred to me that my own degradation must necessarily follow. I endeavoured to persuade her to let me tell this important affair to my parents: this she positively refused. I expressed wonder that she should so faithfully keep this secret for an unworthy woman, who in her infancy had done her such an injury.

"Oh!" said she, "you do not know how much she loves me, or you would not wonder that I never resent that. I have seen her grieve and be so very sorry on my account, that I would not bring her into more trouble for any good that could happen to myself. She has often told me, that since the day she changed us, she has never known what it is to have a happy moment; and when she returned home from nursing you, finding me very thin and sickly, how her heart smote her for what she had done; and then she nursed and fed me with such anxious care, that she grew much fonder of me than if I had been her own; and that on the Sundays, when she used to bring me here, it was more pleasure to her to see me in my own father's house, than it was to her to see you, her real child. The shyness you showed towards her while you were very young, and the forced civility you seemed to affect as you grew older, always appeared like ingratitude towards her who had done so much for you. My mother has de-

sired me to disclose this after her death, but I do not believe I shall ever mention it then, for I should be sorry to bring any reproach even on her memory."

In a short time after this important discovery, Ann was sent home to pass a few weeks with her mother, on the occasion of the unexpected arrival of some visitors to our house; they were to bring children with them, and these I was to consider as my own guests.

In the expected arrival of my young visitants, and in making preparations to entertain them, I had little leisure to deliberate on what conduct I should pursue with regard to my friend's secret. Something must be done, I thought, to make her amends for the injury she had sustained, and I resolved to consider the matter attentively on her return. Still my mind ran on conferring favours. I never considered myself as transformed into the dependent person. Indeed, Sir Edward at this time set me about a task which occupied the whole of my attention; he proposed that I should write a little interlude, after the manner of the French *Petites Pièces;* and to try my ingenuity, no one was to see it before the representation, except the performers, myself, and my little friends, who, as they were all younger than me, could not be expected to lend me much assistance. I have already told you what a proud girl I was. During the writing of this piece, the receiving of my young friends, and the instructing them in their several parts, I never felt myself of so much importance.

With Ann, my pride had somewhat slumbered; the difference of our rank left no room for competition; all was complacency and good-humour on my part, and affectionate gratitude, tempered with respect, on hers. But here I had full room to show courtesy, to affect those graces, to imitate that elegance of manners practised by Lady Harriot to their mothers. I was to be their instructress in action and in attitudes, and to receive their praises and their admiration of my theatrical genius. It was a new scene of triumph for me, and I might then be said to be in the very height of my glory.

If the plot of my piece, for the invention of which they so highly praised me, had been indeed my own, all would have been well; but unhappily I borrowed from a source which made my drama end far differently from what I intended it should. In the catastrophe I lost not only the name I personated in the piece, but with it my own name also; and all my rank and consequence in the world fled from me for ever. My father presented me with a beautiful writing-desk for the use of my new authorship; my silver standish was placed upon it; a quire of gilt paper was before me. I took out a parcel of my best crow quills, and down I sat in the greatest form imaginable.

I conjecture I have no talent for invention; certain it is, that when I sat down to compose my piece, no story would come into my head, but the story which Ann had so lately related to me. Many

sheets were scrawled over in vain, I could think of nothing else; still the babies and the nurse were before me in all the *minutiæ* of description Ann had given them. The costly attire of the lady-babe—the homely garb of the cottage-infant—the affecting address of the fond mother to her own offspring—then the charming *équivoque* in the change of the children; it all looked so dramatic;—it was a play ready-made to my hands. The invalid mother would form the pathetic, the silly exclamations of the servants the ludicrous, and the nurse was nature itself. It is true, I had a few scruples that it might, should it come to the knowledge of Ann, be construed into something very like a breach of confidence. But she was at home, and might never happen to hear of the subject of my piece, and if she did, why, it was only making some handsome apology. To a dependent companion, to whom I had been so very great a friend, it was not necessary to be so very particular about such a trifle.

Thus I reasoned as I wrote my drama, beginning with the title, which I called "The Changeling," and ending with these words: *The curtain drops, while the lady clasps the baby in her arms, and the nurse sighs audibly.* I invented no new incident; I simply wrote the story as Ann had told it to me, in the best blank verse I was able to compose.

By the time it was finished, the company had arrived. The casting the different parts was my next care. The Honourable Augustus M——, a young

gentleman of five years of age, undertook to play the father. He was only to come in and say, *How does my little darling do to-day?* The three Miss——s were to be the servants; they too had only single lines to speak.

As these four were all very young performers, we made them rehearse many times over, that they might walk in and out with proper decorum; but the performance was stopped before their entrances and their exits arrived. I complimented Lady Elizabeth, the sister of Augustus, who was the eldest of the young ladies, with the choice of the lady mother or the nurse. She fixed on the former; she was to recline on a sofa, and, affecting ill health, speak some eight or ten lines, which began with—*O that I could my precious baby see!* To her cousin Miss Emily ——, was given the girl who had the care of the nurse's child; two dolls were to personate the two children; and the principal character of the nurse I had the pleasure to perform myself. It consisted of several speeches, and a very long soliloquy during the changing of the children's clothes.

The elder brother of Augustus, a gentleman of fifteen years of age, who refused to mix in our childish drama, yet condescended to paint the scenes; and our dresses were got up by my own maid.

When we thought ourselves quite perfect in our several parts, we announced it for representation. Sir Edward and Lady Harriot, with their visitors, the parents of my young troop of comedians, hon-

oured us with their presence. The servants were also permitted to go into a music-gallery, which was at the end of a ball-room we had chosen for our theatre.

As author and principal performer, standing before a noble audience, my mind was too much engaged with the arduous task I had undertaken, to glance my eyes towards the music-gallery, or I might have seen two more spectators there than I expected. Nurse Withers and her daughter Ann were there; they had been invited by the housekeeper to be present at the representation of Miss Lesley's play.

In the midst of the performance, as I, in the character of the nurse, was delivering the wrong child to the girl, there was an exclamation from the music-gallery of "Oh! it's all true! it's all true!" This was followed by a bustle among the servants, and screams as of a person in an hysteric fit. Sir Edward came forward to inquire what was the matter. He saw it was Mrs. Withers who had fallen into a fit. Ann was weeping over her, and crying out, "O Miss Lesley, you have told all in the play!"

Mrs. Withers was brought out into the ball-room; there, with tears and in broken accents, with every sign of terror and remorse, she soon made a full confession of her so-long-concealed guilt.

The strangers assembled to see our childish mimicry of passion were witnesses to a highly-wrought dramatic scene in real life. I had intended they

should see the curtain drop without any discovery of the deceit; unable to invent any new incident, I left the conclusion imperfect as I found it; but they saw a more strict poetical justice done; they saw the rightful child restored to its parents, and the nurse overwhelmed with shame, and threatened with the severest punishment.

"Take this woman," said Sir Edward, "and lock her up, till she be delivered into the hands of justice."

Ann, on her knees, implored mercy for her mother. Addressing the children, who were gathered round her, "Dear ladies," said she, "help me, on your knees help me, to beg forgiveness for my mother." Down the young ones all dropped—even Lady Elizabeth bent on her knee. "Sir Edward, pity her distress, Sir Edward, pardon her!" All joined in the petition, except one whose voice ought to have been loudest in the appeal. No word, no accent came from me. I hung over Lady Harriot's chair, weeping as if my heart would break; but I wept for my own fallen fortunes, not for my mother's sorrow.

I thought within myself, "If in the integrity of my heart, refusing to participate in this unjust secret, I had boldly ventured to publish the truth, I might have had some consolation in the praises which so generous an action would have merited; but it is through the vanity of being supposed to have written a pretty story that I have meanly broken my faith with my friend, and unintention-

ally proclaimed the disgrace of my mother and myself." While thoughts like these were passing through my mind, Ann had obtained my mother's pardon. Instead of being sent away to confinement and the horrors of a prison, she was given by Sir Edward into the care of the housekeeper, who had orders from Lady Harriot to see her put to bed and properly attended to, for again this wretched woman had fallen into a fit.

Ann would have followed my mother, but Sir Edward brought her back, telling her that she should see her when she was better. He then led her towards Lady Harriot, desiring her to embrace her child; she did so, and I saw her, as I had phrased it in the play, *clasped in her mother's arms.*

This scene had greatly affected the spirits of Lady Harriot; through the whole of it, it was with difficulty she had been kept from fainting, and she was now led into the drawing-room by the ladies. The gentlemen followed, talking with Sir Edward of the astonishing instance of filial affection they had just seen in the earnest pleadings of the child for her supposed mother.

Ann, too, went with them, and was conducted by her whom I had always considered as my own particular friend. Lady Elizabeth took hold of her hand and said, "Miss Lesley, will you permit me to conduct you to the drawing-room?"

I was left weeping behind the chair where Lady Harriot had sat, and, as I thought, quite alone. A

something had before twitched my frock two or three times so slightly I had scarcely noticed it; a little head now peeped round, and looking up in my face, said, "She is not Miss Lesley!" It was the young Augustus; he had been sitting at my feet, but I had not observed him. He then started up, and taking hold of my hand with one of his, with the other holding fast by my clothes, he led, or rather dragged me, into the midst of the company assembled in the drawing-room. The vehemence of his manner, his little face as red as fire, caught every eye. The ladies smiled, and one gentleman laughed in a most unfeeling manner. His elder brother patted him on the head, and said, "You are a humane little fellow: Elizabeth, we might have thought of this."

Very kind words were now spoken to me by Sir Edward, and he called me Harriot, precious name now grown to me. Lady Harriot kissed me, and said she would never forget how long she had loved me as her child. These were comfortable words; but I heard echoed round the room, "Poor thing, *she* cannot help it—I am sure *she* is to be pitied. Dear Lady Harriot, how kind, how considerate you are!" Ah! what a deep sense of my altered condition did I then feel!

"Let the young ladies divert themselves in another room," said Sir Edward; "and, Harriot, take your new sister with you, and help her to entertain your friends." Yes, he called me Harriot again, and afterwards invented new names for his daughter and

me, and always called us by them, apparently in jest; yet I knew it was only because he would not hurt me with hearing our names reversed. When Sir Edward desired us to show the children into another room, Ann and I walked towards the door. A new sense of humiliation arose—how could I go out at the door before Miss Lesley?—I stood irresolute; she drew back. The elder brother of my friend Augustus assisted me in this perplexity; pushing us all forward, as if in a playful mood, he drove us indiscriminately before him, saying, "I will make one among you to-day." He had never joined in our sports before.

My luckless play, that sad instance of my duplicity, was never once mentioned to me afterwards, not even by any one of the children who had acted in it; and I must also tell you how considerate an old lady was at the time about our dresses. As soon as she perceived things growing very serious, she hastily stripped off the upper garments we wore to represent our different characters. I think I should have died with shame if the child had led me into the drawing-room in the mummery I had worn to represent a nurse. This good lady was of another essential service to me; for perceiving an irresolution in every one how they should behave to us, which distressed me very much, she contrived to place Miss Lesley above me at table, and called her Miss Lesley, and me Miss Withers; saying at the same time in a low voice, but as if she meant I

should hear her, "It is better these things should be done at once, then they are over." My heart thanked her, for I felt the truth of what she said.

My poor mother continued very ill for many weeks; no medicine could remove the extreme dejection of spirits she laboured under. Sir Edward sent for the clergyman of the parish to give her religious consolation. Every day he came to visit her, and he would always take Miss Lesley and me into the room with him. I think, Miss Villiers, your father must be just such another man as Dr. Wheelding, our worthy rector; just so I think he would have soothed the troubled conscience of my repentant mother. How feelingly, how kindly he used to talk of mercy and forgiveness!

My heart was softened by my own misfortunes and the sight of my penitent suffering mother. I felt that she was now my only parent; I strove, earnestly strove, to love her; yet ever when I looked in her face, she would seem to me to be the very identical person whom I should have once thought sufficiently honoured by a slight inclination of the head, and a civil "How do you do, Mrs. Withers?" One day, as Miss Lesley was hanging over her with her accustomed fondness, Dr. Wheelding reading in a prayer-book, and, as I thought, not at that moment regarding us, I threw myself on my knees and silently prayed that I too might be able to love my mother.

Dr. Wheelding had been observing me; he took

me into the garden, and drew from me the subject of my petition.

"Your prayers, my good young lady," said he, "I hope are heard; sure I am they have caused me to adopt a resolution which, as it will enable you to see your mother frequently, will, I hope, greatly assist your pious wishes. I will take your mother home with me to superintend my family. Under my roof, doubtless, Sir Edward will often permit you to see her. Perform your duty towards her as well as you possibly can. Affection is the growth of time. With such good wishes in your young heart, do not despair that in due time it will assuredly spring up."

With the approbation of Sir Edward and Lady Harriot, my mother was removed in a few days to Dr. Wheelding's house. There she soon recovered; there she at present resides. She tells me she loves me almost as well as she did when I was a baby, and we both wept at parting when I came to school.

Here, perhaps, I ought to conclude my story, which I fear has been a tedious one; permit me, however, to say a few words concerning the time which elapsed since the discovery of my birth until my arrival here.

It was on the fifth day of —— that I was known to be Ann Withers, and the daughter of my supposed nurse. The company who were witness to my disgrace departed in a few days, and I felt relieved from some part of the mortification I hourly experienced. For every fresh instance even of kind-

ness or attention I experienced went to my heart, that I should be forced to feel thankful for it.

Circumstanced as I was, surely I had nothing justly to complain of. The conduct of Sir Edward and Lady Harriot was kind in the extreme; still preserving every appearance of a parental tenderness for me, but ah! I might no longer call them by the dear names of father and mother. Formerly, when speaking of them, I used, proud of their titles, to delight to say, "Sir Edward or Lady Harriot did this, or this"; now I would give worlds to say, "My father or my mother."

I should be perfectly unkind if I were to complain of Miss Lesley—indeed, I have not the least cause of complaint against her. As my companion, her affection and her gratitude had been unbounded; and now that it was my turn to be the humble friend, she tried by every means in her power to make me think she felt the same respectful gratitude which in her dependent station she had so naturally displayed.

Only in a few rarely constituted minds does that true attentive kindness spring up, that delicacy of feeling, which enters into every trivial thing, is ever awake and keeping watch lest it should offend. Myself, though educated with the extremest care, possessed but little of this virtue. Virtue I call it, though among men it is termed politeness; for since the days of my humiliating reverse of fortune I have learned its value.

I feel quite ashamed to give instances of any deficiency I observed, or thought I have observed, in Miss Lesley. Now I am away from her, and dispassionately speaking of it, it seems as if my own soreness of temper had made me fancy things. I really believe now that I was mistaken; but Miss Lesley had been so highly praised for her filial tenderness, I thought at last she seemed to make a parade about it, and used to run up to my mother, and affect to be more glad to see her than she really was after a time; and I think Dr. Wheelding thought so by a little hint he once dropped. But he, too, might be mistaken, for he was very partial to me.

I am under the greatest obligation in the world to this good Dr. Wheelding. He has made my mother quite a respectable woman, and I am sure it is owing a great deal to him that she loves me so well as she does.

And here, though it may seem a little out of place, let me stop to assure you, that if I ever could have had any doubt of the sincerity of Miss Lesley's affection towards me, her behaviour on the occasion of my coming here ought completely to efface it. She entreated with many tears, and almost the same energy with which she pleaded for forgiveness for my mother, that I might not be sent away. But she was not alike successful in her supplications.

Miss Lesley had made some progress in reading and writing during the time she was my companion only; it was highly necessary that every exertion

should be now made—the whole house was, as I may say, in requisition for her instruction; Sir Edward and Lady Harriot devoted great part of the day to this purpose. A well-educated young person was taken under our governess to assist her in her labours, and to teach Miss Lesley music. A drawing-master was engaged to reside in the house.

At this time I was not remarkably forward in my education. My governess being a native of France, I spoke French very correctly, and I had made some progress in Italian; but I had had the instruction of masters only during the few months in the year we usually passed in London.

Music I never had the least ear for; I could scarcely be taught my notes. This defect in me was always particularly regretted by my mother, she being an excellent performer herself, both on the piano and on the harp. I think I have some taste for drawing; but as Lady Harriot did not particularly excel in this, I lost so much time in the summer months, practising only under my governess, that I made no great proficiency even in this my favourite art. But Miss Lesley, with all these advantages which I have named,—everybody so eager to instruct her, she so willing to learn—everything so new and delightful to her, how could it happen otherwise? she in a short time became a little prodigy. What best pleased Lady Harriot was, after she had conquered the first difficulties, she discovered a wonderful talent for music. Here she was her

mother's own girl indeed—she had the same sweet-toned voice—the same delicate finger. Her musical governess had little now to do; for as soon as Lady Harriot perceived this excellence in her, she gave up all company and devoted her whole time to instructing her daughter in this science.

Nothing makes the heart ache with such a hopeless, heavy pain, as envy.

I had felt deeply before, but till now I could not be said to envy Miss Lesley. All day long the notes of the harp or the piano spoke sad sounds to me of the loss of a loved mother's heart.

To have in a manner two mothers, and Miss Lesley to engross them both, was too much indeed.

It was at this time that one day I had been wearied with hearing Lady Harriot play one long piece of Haydn's music after another to her enraptured daughter. We were to walk with our governess to Dr. Wheelding's that morning; and after Lady Harriot had left the room, and we were quite ready for our walk, Miss Lesley would not leave the instrument for I know not how long.

It was on that day that I thought she was not quite honest in her expressions of joy at the sight of my poor mother, who had been waiting at the garden-gate near two hours to see her arrive; yet she might be, for the music had put her in remarkably good spirits that morning.

Oh, the music quite, quite won Lady Harriot's heart! Till Miss Lesley began to play so well, she

often lamented the time it would take before her daughter would have the air of a person of fashion's child. It was my part of the general instruction to give her lessons on this head. We used to make a kind of play of it, which we called lectures on fashionable manners: it was a pleasant amusement to me, a sort of keeping up the memory of past times. But now the music was always in the way. The last time it was talked of, Lady Harriot said her daughter's time was too precious to be taken up with such trifling.

I must own that the music had that effect on Miss Lesley, as to render these lectures less necessary, which I will explain to you; but first let me assure you that Lady Harriot was by no means in the habit of saying things of this kind. It was almost a solitary instance; I could give you a thousand instances the very reverse of this, in her as well as in Sir Edward. How kindly, how frequently, would they remind me, that to me alone it was owing that they ever knew their child! calling the day on which I was a petitioner for the admittance of Ann into the house, the blessed birthday of their generous girl.

Neither dancing, nor any foolish lectures, could do much for Miss Lesley; she remained for some time wanting in gracefulness of carriage; but all that is usually attributed to dancing, music finally effected. When she was sitting before the instrument, a resemblance to her mother became apparent to every eye. Her attitudes and the expression

of her countenance were the very same. This soon followed her into everything; all was ease and natural grace; for the music, and with it the idea of Lady Harriot, was always in her thoughts. It was a pretty sight to see the daily improvement in her person, even to me, poor envious girl that I was.

Soon after Lady Harriot had hurt me by calling my little efforts to improve her daughter trifling, she made me large amends in a very kind and most unreserved conversation that she held with me.

She told me all the struggles she had had at first to feel a maternal tenderness for her daughter; and she frankly confessed, that she had now gained so much on her affections that she feared she had too much neglected the solemn promise she had made me, *Never to forget how long she had loved me as her child.*

Encouraged by her returning kindness, I owned how much I had suffered; and ventured to express my fears that I had hardly courage enough to bear the sight of my former friends under a new designation, as I must now appear to them on our removal to London, which was expected to take place in a short time.

A few days after this she told me in the gentlest manner possible that Sir Edward and herself were of opinion it would conduce to my happiness to pass a year or two at school.

I knew that this proposal was kindly intended to spare me the mortification I so much dreaded;

therefore I endeavoured to submit to my hard fate with cheerfulness, and prepared myself, not without reluctance, to quit a mansion which had been the scene of so many enjoyments, and latterly of such very different feelings.

ELINOR FORESTER

WHEN I was very young, I had the misfortune to lose my mother. My father very soon married again. The morning of the day on which that event took place, my father set me on his knee, and as he often used to do after the death of my mother, he called me his dear little orphaned Elinor; and then he asked me if I loved Miss Saville. I replied "Yes." Then he said, this dear lady was going to be so kind as to be married to him, and that she was to live with us and be my mamma. My father told me this with such pleasure in his looks, that I thought it must be a very fine thing indeed to have a new mamma; and on his saying it was time for me to be dressed against his return from church, I ran in great spirits to tell the good news in the nursery. I found my maid and the housemaid looking out of the window to see my father get into his carriage, which was newly painted; the servants had new liveries and fine white ribands in their hats; and then I perceived my father had left off his mourning. The maids were dressed in new coloured gowns

and white ribands. On the table I saw a new muslin frock trimmed with fine lace, ready for me to put on. I skipped about the room quite in an ecstasy.

When the carriage drove from the door, the housekeeper came in to bring the maids new white gloves. I repeated to her the words I had just heard, that that dear lady, Miss Saville, was going to be married to papa, and that she was to live with us and be my mamma.

The housekeeper shook her head, and said, "Poor thing! how soon children forget everything!"

I could not imagine what she meant by my forgetting everything, for I instantly recollected poor mamma used to say I had an excellent memory.

The women began to draw on their white gloves, and the seams rending in several places, Ann said, "This is just the way our gloves served us at my mistress's funeral." The other checked her, and said "Hush!" I was then thinking of some instances in which my mamma had praised my memory, and this reference to her funeral fixed her idea in my mind.

From the time of her death no one had ever spoken to me of my mamma, and I had apparently forgotten her; yet I had a habit, which perhaps had not been observed, of taking my little stool, which had been my mamma's footstool, and a doll which my mamma had dressed for me while she was sitting in her elbow-chair, her head supported with pillows. With these in my hands, I used to go to the door of

the room in which I had seen her in her last illness; and after trying to open it, and peeping through the keyhole, from whence I could just see a glimpse of the crimson curtains, I used to sit down on the stool before the door, and play with my doll, and sometimes sing to it mamma's pretty song of "Balow my babe"; imitating as well as I could the weak voice in which she used to sing it to me. My mamma had a very sweet voice. I remember now the gentle tone in which she used to say my prattle did not disturb her.

When I was dressed in my new frock, I wished poor mamma was alive to see how fine I was on papa's wedding-day, and I ran to my favourite station at her bedroom door. There I sat thinking of my mamma, and trying to remember exactly how she used to look; because I foolishly imagined that Miss Saville was to be changed into something like my own mother, whose pale and delicate appearance in her last illness was all that I retained of her remembrance.

When my father returned home with his bride, he walked upstairs to look for me, and my new mamma followed him. They found me at my mother's door, earnestly looking through the keyhole. I was thinking so intently on my mother, that when my father said, "Here is your new mamma, my Elinor," I turned round and began to cry, for no other reason than because she had a very high colour, and I remembered my mamma was very pale;

she had bright black eyes, my mother's were mild blue eyes; and that instead of the wrapping gown and close cap in which I remembered my mamma, she was dressed in all her bridal decorations.

I said, "Miss Saville shall not be my mamma," and I cried till I was sent away in disgrace.

Every time I saw her for several days, the same notion came into my head that she was not a bit more like mamma than when she was Miss Saville. My father was very angry when he saw how shy I continued to look at her; but she always said, "Never mind! Elinor and I shall soon be better friends."

One day, when I was very naughty indeed, for I would not speak one word to either of them, my papa took his hat and walked out, quite in a passion. When he was gone, I looked up at my new mamma, expecting to see her very angry too; but she was smiling and looking very good-naturedly upon me; and she said, "Now we are alone together, my pretty little daughter, let us forget papa is angry with us, and tell me why you were peeping through that door the day your papa brought me home, and you cried so at the sight of me." "Because mamma used to be there," I replied. When she heard me say this, she fell a-crying very sadly indeed; and I was so very sorry to hear her cry so, that I forgot I did not love her, and I went up to her and said, "Don't cry, I won't be naughty any more, I won't peep through the door any more."

Then she said I had a little kind heart, and I should not have any occasion, for she would take me into the room herself; and she rang the bell, and ordered the key of that room to be brought to her; and the housekeeper brought it, and tried to persuade her not to go. But she said, "I must have my own way in this"; and she carried me in her arms into my mother's room.

Oh, I was so pleased to be taken into mamma's room. I pointed out to her all the things that I remembered to have belonged to mamma, and she encouraged me to tell her all the little incidents which had dwelt on my memory concerning her. She told me that she went to school with mamma when she was a little girl, and that I should come into this room with her every day when papa was gone out, and she would tell me stories of mamma when she was a little girl no bigger than me.

When my father came home we were walking in a garden at the back of our house, and I was showing her mamma's geraniums, and telling her what pretty flowers they had when mamma was alive.

My father was astonished; and he said, "Is this the sullen Elinor? what has worked this miracle?" "Ask no questions," she replied, "or you will disturb our new-born friendship. Elinor has promised to love me, and she says, too, that she will call me 'mamma.'" "Yes, I will,—mamma, mamma, mamma," I replied, and hung about her with the greatest fondness.

After this she used to pass great part of the mornings with me in my mother's room, which was now made the repository of all my playthings, and also my schoolroom. Here my new mamma taught me to read. I was a sad little dunce, and scarcely knew my letters. My own mamma had often said, when she got better she would hear me read every day, but as she never got better, it was not her fault. I now began to learn very fast, for when I said my lesson well, I was always rewarded with some pretty story of my mother's childhood; and these stories generally contained some little hints that were instructive to me, and which I greatly stood in want of; for, between improper indulgence and neglect, I had many faulty ways.

In this kind manner my mother-in-law has instructed and improved me, and I love her because she was my mother's friend when they were young. She has been my only instructress, for I never went to school till I came here. She would have continued to teach me, but she has not time, for she has a little baby of her own now, and that is the reason I came to school.

MARGARET GREEN

MY father has been dead nearly three years. Soon after his death, my mother being left in reduced circumstances, she was induced to accept

the offer of Mrs. Beresford, an elderly lady of large fortune, to live in her house as her companion and the superintendent of her family. This lady was my godmother, and as I was my mother's only child, she very kindly permitted her to have me with her.

Mrs. Beresford lived in a large old family mansion; she kept no company, and never moved except from the breakfast-parlour to the eating-room, and from thence to the drawing-room to tea.

Every morning when she first saw me, she used to nod her head very kindly, and say, "How do you do, little Margaret?" But I do not recollect she ever spoke to me during the remainder of the day: except, indeed, after I had read the psalms and the chapters, which was my daily task; then she used constantly to observe that I improved in my reading, and frequently added, "I never heard a child read so distinctly."

She had been remarkably fond of needlework, and her conversation with my mother was generally the history of some pieces of work she had formerly done; the dates when they were begun, and when finished; what had retarded their progress, and what had hastened their completion. If occasionally any other events were spoken of, she had no other chronology to reckon by, than in the recollection of what carpet, what sofa-cover, what set of chairs, were in the frame at that time.

I believe my mother is not particularly fond of

needlework; for in my father's lifetime I never saw her amuse herself in this way; yet, to oblige her kind patroness, she undertook to finish a large carpet which the old lady had just begun when her eyesight failed her. All day long my mother used to sit at the frame, talking of the shades of the worsted, and the beauty of the colours—Mrs. Beresford seated in a chair near her, and, though her eyes were so dim she could hardly distinguish one colour from another, watching through her spectacles the progress of the work.

When my daily portion of reading was over, I had a taste of needlework, which generally lasted half an hour. I was not allowed to pass more time in reading or work, because my eyes were very weak, for which reason I was always set to read in the large-print family Bible. I was very fond of reading; and when I could, unobserved, steal a few minutes as they were intent on their work, I used to delight to read in the historical part of the Bible; but this, because of my eyes, was a forbidden pleasure; and the Bible never being removed out of the room, it was only for a short time together that I dared softly to lift up the leaves and peep into it.

As I was permitted to walk in the garden, or wander about the house whenever I pleased, I used to leave the parlour for hours together, and make out my own solitary amusement as well as I could. My first visit was always to a very large hall, which, from being paved with marble, was called the mar-

ble hall. In this hall, while Mrs. Beresford's husband was living, the tenants used to be feasted at Christmas.

The heads of the twelve Cæsars were hung round the hall. Every day I mounted on the chairs to look at them, and to read the inscriptions underneath, till I became perfectly familiar with their names and features.

Hogarth's prints were below the Cæsars: I was very fond of looking at them, and endeavouring to make out their meaning.

An old broken battledore and some shuttlecocks, with most of the feathers missing, were on a marble slab in one corner of the hall, which constantly reminded me that there had once been younger inhabitants here than the old lady and her gray-headed servants. In another corner stood a marble figure of a satyr; every day I laid my hand on his shoulder to feel how cold he was.

This hall opened into a room full of family portraits. They were all in the dresses of former times: some were old men and women, and some were children. I used to long to have a fairy's power to call the children down from their frames to play with me. One little girl in particular, who hung by the side of a glass door which opened into the garden, I often invited to walk there with me, but she still kept her station—one arm round a little lamb's neck, and in her hand a large bunch of roses. From this room I usually proceeded to the garden.

When I was weary of the garden I wandered over the rest of the house. The best suite of rooms I never saw by any other light than what glimmered through the tops of the window-shutters, which, however, served to show the carved chimney-pieces, and the curious old ornaments about the rooms; but the worked furniture and carpets of which I heard such constant praises I could have but an imperfect sight of, peeping under the covers which were kept over them, by the dim light; for I constantly lifted up a corner of the envious cloth that hid these highly-praised rarities from my view.

The bedrooms were also regularly explored by me, as well to admire the antique furniture, as for the sake of contemplating the tapestry hangings, which were full of Bible history. The subject of the one which chiefly attracted my attention was Hagar and her son Ishmael. Every day I admired the beauty of the youth, and pitied the forlorn state of him and his mother in the wilderness. At the end of the gallery into which these tapestry rooms opened, was one door which, having often in vain attempted to open, I concluded to be locked; and finding myself shut out, I was very desirous of seeing what it contained; and though still foiled in the attempt, I every day endeavoured to turn the lock, which—whether by constantly trying I loosened, being probably a very old one, or that the door was not locked but fastened tight by time, I know not —to my great joy, as I was one day trying the lock

as usual, it gave way, and I found myself in this so-long-desired room.

It proved to be a very large library. This was indeed a precious discovery. I looked round on the books with the greatest delight. I thought I would read them every one. I now forsook all my favourite haunts, and passed all my time here. I took down first one book, then another.

If you never spent whole mornings alone in a large library, you cannot conceive the pleasure of taking down books in the constant hope of finding an entertaining book among them; yet, after many days, meeting with nothing but disappointment, it becomes less pleasant. All the books within my reach were folios of the gravest cast. I could understand very little that I read in them, and the old dark print and the length of the lines made my eyes ache.

When I had almost resolved to give up the search as fruitless, I perceived a volume lying in an obscure corner of the room. I opened it. It was a charming print; the letters were almost as large as the type of the family Bible. In the first page I looked into I saw the name of my favourite Ishmael, whose face I knew so well from the tapestry, and whose history I had often read in the Bible.

I sat myself down to read this book with the greatest eagerness. The title of it was *Mahometanism Explained.* It was a very improper book, for it contained a false history of Abraham and his descendants.

I shall be quite ashamed to tell you the strange effect it had on me. I know it was very wrong to read any book without permission to do so. If my time were to come over again, I would go and tell my mamma that there was a library in the house, and ask her to permit me to read a little while every day in some book that she might think proper to select for me. But unfortunately I did not then recollect that I ought to do this: the reason of my strange forgetfulness might be that my mother, following the example of her patroness, had almost wholly discontinued talking to me. I scarcely ever heard a word addressed to me from morning to night. If it were not for the old servants saying, "Good morning to you, Miss Margaret!" as they passed me in the long passages, I should have been the greatest part of the day in as perfect a solitude as Robinson Crusoe. It must have been because I was never spoken to at all that I forgot what was right and what was wrong, for I do not believe that I ever remembered I was doing wrong all the time I was reading in the library. A great many of the leaves in *Mahometanism Explained* were torn out, but enough remained to make me imagine that Ishmael was the true son of Abraham; I read here that the true descendants of Abraham were known by a light which streamed from the middle of their foreheads. It said that Ishmael's father and mother first saw this light streaming from his forehead as he was lying asleep in the cradle. I was very sorry

so many of the leaves were torn out, for it was as entertaining as a fairy tale. I used to read the history of Ishmael, and then go and look at him in the tapestry, and then read his history again. When I had almost learned the history of Ishmael by heart, I read the rest of the book, and then I came to the history of Mahomet, who was there said to be the last descendant of Abraham.

If Ishmael had engaged so much of my thoughts, how much more so must Mahomet? His history was full of nothing but wonders from the beginning to the end. The book said that those who believed all the wonderful stories which were related of Mahomet were called Mahometans, and True Believers:—I concluded that I must be a Mahometan, for I believed every word I read.

At length I met with something which I also believed, though I trembled as I read it. This was, that after we are dead we are to pass over a narrow bridge, which crosses a bottomless gulf. The bridge was described to be no wider than a silken thread; and it is said that all who were not Mahometans would slip on one side of this bridge, and drop into the tremendous gulf that had no bottom. I considered myself as a Mahometan, yet I was perfectly giddy whenever I thought of passing over this bridge.

One day, seeing the old lady totter across the room, a sudden terror seized me, for I thought how would she ever be able to get over the bridge? Then too it was that I first recollected that my mother

would also be in imminent danger; for I imagined she had never heard the name of Mahomet, because I foolishly conjectured this book had been locked up for ages in the library, and was utterly unknown to the rest of the world.

All my desire was now to tell them the discovery I had made; for I thought, when they knew of the existence of *Mahometanism Explained*, they would read it, and become Mahometans, to ensure themselves a safe passage over the silken bridge. But it wanted more courage than I possessed to break the matter to my intended converts; I must acknowledge that I had been reading without leave; and the habit of never speaking, or being spoken to, considerably increased the difficulty.

My anxiety on this subject threw me into a fever. I was so ill that my mother thought it necessary to sleep in the same room with me. In the middle of the night I could not resist the strong desire I felt to tell her what preyed so much on my mind.

I awoke her out of a sound sleep, and begged she would be so kind as to be a Mahometan. She was very much alarmed, for she thought I was delirious, which I believe I was; for I tried to explain the reason of my request, but it was in such an incoherent manner that she could not at all comprehend what I was talking about.

The next day a physician was sent for, and he discovered, by several questions that he put to me, that I had read myself into a fever. He gave me

medicines, and ordered me to be kept very quiet, and said he hoped in a few days I should be very well; but as it was a new case to him, he never having attended a little Mahometan before, if any lowness continued after he had removed the fever, he would, with my mother's permission, take me home with him to study this extraordinary case at his leisure; and added, that he could then hold a consultation with his wife, who was often very useful to him in prescribing remedies for the maladies of his younger patients.

In a few days he fetched me away. His wife was in the carriage with him. Having heard what he said about her prescriptions, I expected, between the doctor and his lady, to undergo a severe course of medicine, especially as I heard him very formally ask her advice what was good for a Mahometan fever, the moment after he had handed me into the carriage. She studied a little while, and then she said, a ride to Harlow Fair would not be amiss. He said he was entirely of her opinion, because it suited him to go there to buy a horse.

During the ride they entered into conversation with me, and in answer to their questions, I was relating to them the solitary manner in which I had passed my time; how I found out the library, and what I had read in the fatal book which had so heated my imagination—when we arrived at the fair; and Ishmael, Mahomet, and the narrow bridge vanished out of my head in an instant.

Oh! what a cheerful sight it was to me to see so many happy faces assembled together, walking up and down between the rows of booths that were full of showy things; ribands, laces, toys, cakes, and sweetmeats! While the doctor was gone to buy his horse, his kind lady let me stand as long as I pleased at the booths, and gave me many things which she saw I particularly admired. My needle-case, my pincushion, indeed, my work-basket and all its contents, are presents which she purchased for me at this fair. After we returned home she played with me all the evening at a geographical game, which she also bought for me at this cheerful fair.

The next day she invited some young ladies of my own age to spend the day with me. She had a swing put up in the garden for us, and a room cleared of the furniture, that we might play at blindman's buff. One of the liveliest of the girls, who had taken on herself the direction of our sports, she kept to be my companion all the time I stayed with her, and every day contrived some new amusement for us.

Yet this good lady did not suffer all my time to pass in mirth and gaiety. Before I went home she explained to me very seriously the error into which I had fallen. I found that so far from *Mahometanism Explained* being a book concealed only in this library, it was well known to every person of the least information.

The Turks, she told me, were Mahometans, and

that, if the leaves of my favourite book had not been torn out, I should have read that the author of it did not mean to give the fabulous stories here related as true, but only wrote it as giving a history of what the Turks, who are a very ignorant people, believe concerning the impostor Mahomet, who feigned himself to be a descendant of Ishmael. By the good offices of the physician and his lady, I was carried home at the end of a month, perfectly cured of the error into which I had fallen, and very much ashamed of having believed so many absurdities.

EMILY BARTON

WHEN I was a very young child, I remember residing with an uncle and aunt who live in ——shire. I think I remained there near a twelvemonth. I am ignorant of the cause of my being so long left there by my parents, who, though they were remarkably fond of me, never came to see me during all that time. As I did not know I should ever have occasion to relate the occurrences of my life, I never thought of inquiring the reason.

I am just able to recollect that when I first went there I thought it was a fine thing to live in the country, and play with my little cousins in the garden all day long; and I also recollect that I soon found that it was a very dull thing to live in the country with little cousins who have a papa and

mamma in the house, while my own dear papa and mamma were in London, many miles away.

I have heard my papa observe, girls who are not well managed are a most quarrelsome race of little people. My cousins very often quarrelled with me, and then they always said, "I will go and tell my mamma, cousin Emily"; and then I used to be very disconsolate, because I had no mamma to complain to of my grievances.

My aunt always took Sophia's part because she was so young; and she never suffered me to oppose Mary or Elizabeth, because they were older than me.

The playthings were all the property of one or other of my cousins. The large dolls belonged to Mary or Elizabeth, and the pretty little wax dolls were dressed on purpose for Sophia, who always began to cry the instant I touched them. I had nothing that I could call my own but one pretty book of stories; and one day, as Sophia was endeavouring to take it from me, and I was trying to keep it, it was all torn to pieces; and my aunt would not be angry with her. She only said, Sophia was a little baby and did not know any better. My uncle promised to buy me another book, but he never remembered it. Very often when he came home in the evening he used to say, "I wonder what I have got in my pocket"; and then they all crowded round him, and I used to creep towards him, and think, maybe it is my book that my uncle has got in his pocket. But, no; nothing ever came out for me. Yet

the first sight of a plaything, even if it be not one's own, is always a cheerful thing, and a new toy would put them in a good humour for a while, and they would say, "Here, Emily, look what I have got. You may take it in your own hand and look at it." But the pleasure of examining it was sure to be stopped in a short time by the old story of "Give that to me again; you know that is mine." Nobody could help, I think, being a little out of humour if they were always served so; but if I showed any signs of discontent, my aunt always told my uncle I was a little peevish fretful thing, and gave her more trouble than all her own children put together. My aunt would often say, what a happy thing it was to have such affectionate children as hers were. She was always praising my cousins because they were affectionate; that was sure to be her word. She said I had not one atom of affection in my disposition, for that no kindness ever made the least impression on me. And she would say all this with Sophia seated on her lap, and the two eldest perhaps hanging round their papa, while I was so dull to see them taken so much notice of, and so sorry that I was not affectionate, that I did not know what to do with myself.

Then there was another complaint against me; that I was so shy before strangers. Whenever any strangers spoke to me, before I had time to think what answer I should give, Mary or Elizabeth would say, "Emily is so shy, she will never speak." Then I, thinking I was very shy, would creep into a corner

of the room, and be ashamed to look up while the company stayed.

Though I often thought of my papa and mamma, by degrees the remembrance of their persons faded out of my mind. When I tried to think how they used to look, the faces of my cousins' papa and mamma only came into my mind.

One morning my uncle and aunt went abroad before breakfast, and took my cousins with them. They very often went out for whole days together and left me at home. Sometimes they said it was because they could not take so many children; and sometimes they said it was because I was so shy, it was no amusement to me to go abroad.

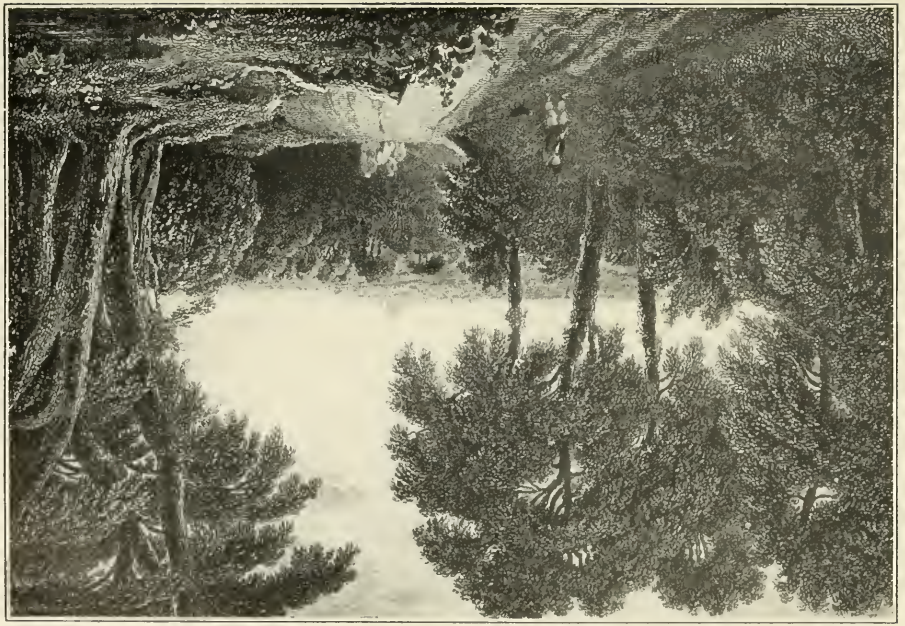
That morning I was very solitary indeed, for they had even taken the dog Sancho with them, and I was very fond of him. I went all about the house and garden to look for him. Nobody could tell me where Sancho was, and then I went into the front court and called, "Sancho, Sancho." An old man that worked in the garden was there, and he said Sancho was gone with his master. Oh! how sorry I was; I began to cry, for Sancho and I used to amuse ourselves for hours together when everybody was gone out. I cried till I heard the mail-coachman's horn, and then I ran to the gate to see the mail-coach go past. It stopped before our gate, and a gentleman got out, and the moment he saw me he took me in his arms, and kissed me, and said I was Emily Barton, and asked me why the tears were on

my little pale cheeks; and I told him the cause of my distress. The old man asked him to walk into the house, and was going to call one of the servants; but the gentleman would not let him, and he said, "Go on with your work, I want to talk to this little girl before I go into the house." Then he sat down on a bench which was in the court, and asked me many questions; and I told him all my little troubles, for he was such a good-natured looking gentleman that I prattled very freely to him. I told him all I have told you, and more, for the unkind treatment I met with was more fresh in my mind than it is now. Then he called to the old man, and desired him to fetch a post-chaise, and gave him money that he should make haste, and I never saw the old man walk so fast before. When he had been gone a little while, the gentleman said, "Will you walk with me down the road to meet the chaise, and you shall ride in it a little way along with me." I had nothing on, not even my old straw bonnet that I used to wear in the garden; but I did not mind that, and I ran by his side a good way, till we met the chaise, and the old man riding with the driver. The gentleman said, "Get down and open the door," and then he lifted me in. The old man looked in a sad fright, and said "Oh! sir, I hope you are not going to take the child away?" The gentleman threw out a small card, and bid him give that to his master, and calling to the post-boy to drive on, we lost sight of the old man in a minute.

The gentleman laughed very much and said, "We have frightened the old man, he thinks I am going to run away with you"; and I laughed, and thought it a very good joke, and he said, "So you tell me you are very shy"; and I replied, "Yes, sir, I am, before strangers." He said, "So I perceive you are," and then he laughed again, and I laughed, though I did not know why. We had such a merry ride, laughing all the way at one thing or another, till we came to a town where the chaise stopped, and he ordered some breakfast. When I got out I began to shiver a little, for it was the latter end of autumn; the leaves were falling off the trees, and the air blew very cold. Then he desired the waiter to go and order a straw hat and a little warm coat for me; and when the milliner came, he told her he had stolen a little heiress, and we were going to Gretna Green in such a hurry that the young lady had no time to put on her bonnet before she came out. The milliner said I was a pretty little heiress, and she wished us a pleasant journey. When we had breakfasted, and I was equipped in my new coat and bonnet, I jumped into the chaise again as warm and as lively as a little bird.

When it grew dark we entered a large city; the chaise began to roll over the stones, and I saw the lamps ranged along London streets.

Though we had breakfasted and dined upon the road, and I had got out of one chaise into another many times, and was now riding on in the dark, I



never once considered where I was, or where I was going to. I put my head out of the chaise window, and admired those beautiful lights. I was sorry when the chaise stopped, and I could no longer look at the brilliant rows of lighted lamps.

Taken away by a stranger under a pretence of a short ride, and brought quite to London, do you not expect some perilous end of this adventure? Ah! it was my papa himself, though I did not know who he was till after he had put me into my mamma's arms, and told her how he had run away with his own little daughter. "It is your papa, my dear, that has brought you to your own home."—"This is your mamma, my love," they both exclaimed at once. Mamma cried for joy to see me, and she wept again when she heard my papa tell what a neglected child I had been at my uncle's. This he had found out, he said, by my own innocent prattle, and that he was so offended with his brother, my uncle, that he would not enter his house. And then he said what a little, happy, good child I had been all the way, and that when he found I did not know him, he would not tell me who he was, for the sake of the pleasant surprise it would be to me. It was a surprise and a happiness indeed, after living with unkind relations, all at once to know I was at home with my own dear papa and mamma.

My mamma ordered tea. Whenever I happen to like my tea very much, I always think of the delicious cup of tea mamma gave us after our journey.

I think I see the urn smoking before me now, and papa wheeling the sofa round, that I might sit between them at the table.

Mamma called me Little Runaway, and said it was very well it was only papa. I told her how we frightened the old gardener, and opened my eyes to show her how he stared, and how my papa made the milliner believe we were going to Gretna Green. Mamma looked grave, and said she was almost frightened to find I had been so fearless; but I promised her another time I would not go into a post-chaise with a gentleman without asking him who he was: and then she laughed, and seemed very well satisfied.

Mamma, to my fancy, looked very handsome. She was very nicely dressed, quite like a fine lady. I held up my head, and felt very proud that I had such a papa and mamma. I thought to myself, "O dear, my cousins' papa and mamma are not to be compared to mine!"

Papa said, "What makes you bridle and simper so, Emily?" Then I told him all that was in my mind. Papa asked if I did not think him as pretty as I did mamma. I could not say much for his beauty, but I told him he was a much finer gentleman than my uncle, and that I liked him the first moment I saw him, because he looked so good-natured. He said, "Well, then, he must be content with that half praise; but he had always thought himself very handsome." "O dear!" said I, and fell

a-laughing, till I spilt my tea, and mamma called me a little awkward girl.

The next morning my papa was going to the Bank to receive some money, and he took mamma and me with him, that I might have a ride through London streets. Every one that has been in London must have seen the Bank, and therefore you may imagine what an effect the fine large rooms, and the bustle and confusion of people had on me, who was grown such a little wondering rustic that the crowded streets and the fine shops alone kept me in continual admiration.

As we were returning home down Cheapside, papa said, "Emily shall take home some little books. Shall we order the coachman to the corner of St. Paul's Churchyard, or shall we go to the Juvenile Library in Skinner Street?" Mamma said she would go to Skinner Street, for she wanted to look at the new buildings there. Papa bought me seven new books, and the lady in the shop persuaded him to take more, but mamma said that was quite enough at present.

We went home by Ludgate Hill, because mamma wanted to buy something there; and while she went into a shop, papa heard me read in one of my new books, and said he was glad to find I could read so well, for I had forgot to tell him my aunt used to hear me read every day.

My papa stopped the coach opposite to St. Dunstan's Church, that I might see the great iron figures strike upon the bell, to give notice that it was a

quarter of an hour past two. We waited some time that I might see this sight, but just at the moment they were striking, I happened to be looking at a toy-shop that was on the other side of the way, and unluckily missed it. Papa said, "Never mind; we will go into the toy-shop, and I dare say we shall find something that will console you for your disappointment." "Do," said mamma, "for I knew Miss Pearson, who keeps this shop, at Weymouth, when I was a little girl, not much older than Emily. Take notice of her,—she is a very intelligent old lady." Mamma made herself known to Miss Pearson, and showed me to her, but I did not much mind what they said; no more did papa—for we were busy among the toys.

A large wax-doll, a baby-house completely furnished, and several other beautiful toys, were bought for me. I sat and looked at them with an amazing deal of pleasure as we rode home—they quite filled up one side of the coach.

The joy I discovered at possessing things I could call my own, and the frequent repetition of the words, *My own, my own*, gave my mamma some uneasiness. She justly feared that the cold treatment I had experienced at my uncle's had made me selfish, and therefore she invited a little girl to spend a few days with me, to see, as she has since told me, if I should not be liable to fall into the same error from which I had suffered so much at my uncle's.

As my mamma had feared, so the event proved;

for I quickly adopted my cousins' selfish ideas, and gave the young lady notice that they were my own playthings, and she must not amuse herself with them any longer than I permitted her. Then presently I took occasion to begin a little quarrel with her, and said, "I have got a mamma now, Miss Frederica, as well as you, and I will go and tell her, and she will not let you play with my doll any longer than I please, because it is my own doll." And I very well remember I imitated, as nearly as I could, the haughty tone in which my cousins used to speak to me.

"Oh, fie! Emily," said my mamma; "can you be the little girl who used to be so distressed because your cousins would not let you play with their dolls? Do you not see you are doing the very same unkind thing to your playfellow that they did to you?" Then I saw as plain as could be what a naughty girl I was, and I promised not to do so any more.

A lady was sitting with mamma, and mamma said, "I believe I must pardon you this once, but I hope never to see such a thing again. This lady is Miss Frederica's mamma, and I am quite ashamed that she should be witness to your inhospitality to her daughter, particularly as she was so kind to come on purpose to invite you to a share in her *own* private box at the theatre this evening. Her carriage is waiting at the door to take us, but how can we accept of the invitation after what has happened?"

The lady begged it might all be forgotten; and

mamma consented that I should go, and she said, "But I hope, my dear Emily, when you are sitting in the playhouse, you will remember that pleasures are far more delightful when they are shared among numbers. If the whole theatre were your own, and you were sitting by yourself to see the performance, how dull it would seem to what you will find it, with so many happy faces around us, all amused with the same thing!" I hardly knew what my mamma meant, for I had never seen a play; but when I got there, after the curtain drew up, I looked up towards the galleries, and down into the pit, and into all the boxes, and then I knew what a pretty sight it was to see a number of happy faces. I was very well convinced that it would not have been half so cheerful, if the theatre had been my own, to have sat there by myself. From that time, whenever I felt inclined to be selfish, I used to remember the theatre where the mamma of the young lady I had been so rude to gave me a seat in her own box. There is nothing in the world so charming as going to a play. All the way there I was as dull and as silent as I used to be in ——shire, because I was so sorry mamma had been displeased with me. Just as the coach stopped, Miss Frederica said, "Will you be friends with me, Emily?" and I replied, "Yes, if you please, Frederica"; and we went hand-in-hand together into the house. I did not speak any more till we entered the box, but after that I was as lively as if nothing at all had happened.

I shall never forget how delighted I was at the first sight of the house. My little friend and I were placed together in the front, while our mammas retired to the back part of the box to chat by themselves, for they had been so kind as to come very early, that I might look about me before the performance began.

Frederica had been very often at a play. She was very useful in telling me what everything was. She made me observe how the common people were coming bustling down the benches in the galleries, as if they were afraid they should lose their places. She told me what a crowd these poor people had to go through before they got into the house. Then she showed me how leisurely they all came into the pit, and looked about them before they took their seats. She gave me a charming description of the king and queen at the play, and showed me where they sat, and told me how the princesses were dressed. It was a pretty sight to see the remainder of the candles lighted; and so it was to see the musicians come up from under the stage. I admired the music very much, and I asked if that was the play. Frederica laughed at my ignorance, and then she told me, when the play began the green curtain would draw up to the sound of soft music and I should hear a lady, dressed in black, say,

"Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast";

and those were the very first words the actress, whose

name was Almeria, spoke. When the curtain began to draw up, and I saw the bottom of her black petticoat, and heard the soft music, what an agitation I was in! But before that we had long to wait. Frederica told me we should wait till all the dress-boxes were full, and then the lights would pop up under the orchestra; the second music would play, and then the play would begin.

This play was the Mourning Bride. It was a very moving tragedy; and after that, when the curtain dropped, and I thought it was all over, I saw the most diverting pantomime that ever was seen. I made a strange blunder the next day, for I told papa that Almeria was married to Harlequin at last; but I assure you I meant to say Columbine, for I knew very well that Almeria was married to Alphonso; for she said she was in the first scene. She thought he was dead, but she found him again, just as I did my papa and mamma, when she least expected it.

MARIA HOWE

I WAS brought up in the country. From my infancy I was always a weak and tender-spirited girl, subject to fears and depressions. My parents, and particularly my mother, were of a very different disposition. They were what is usually called gay: they loved pleasure, and parties, and visiting; but as they found the turn of my mind to be quite

opposite, they gave themselves little trouble about me, but upon such occasions generally left me to my choice, which was much oftener to stay at home and indulge myself in my solitude, than to join in their rambling visits. I was always fond of being alone, yet always in a manner afraid. There was a book closet which led into my mother's dressing-room. Here I was eternally fond of being shut up by myself, to take down whatever volumes I pleased, and pore upon them, no matter whether they were fit for my years or no, or whether I understood them. Here, when the weather would not permit my going into the dark walk, *my walk*, as it was called, in the garden; here, when my parents have been from home, I have stayed for hours together, till the loneliness which pleased me so at first, has at length become quite frightful and I have rushed out of the closet into the inhabited parts of the house, and sought refuge in the lap of some one of the female servants, or of my aunt, who would say, seeing me look pale, that Maria had been frightening herself with some of those *nasty books:* so she used to call my favourite volumes, which I would not have parted with, no, not with one of the least of them, if I had had the choice to be made a fine princess, and to govern the world. But my aunt was no reader. She used to excuse herself, and say that reading hurt her eyes. I have been naughty enough to think that this was only an excuse, for I found that my aunt's weak eyes did not prevent her from poring ten hours

a day upon her prayer-book, or her favourite *Thomas à Kempis*. But this was always her excuse for not reading any of the books I recommended. My aunt was my father's sister. She had never been married. My father was a good deal older than my mother, and my aunt was ten years older than my father. As I was often left at home with her, and as my serious disposition so well agreed with hers, an intimacy grew up between the old lady and me, and she would often say that she loved only one person in the world and that was me. Not that she and my parents were on very bad terms; but the old lady did not feel herself respected enough. The attention and fondness which she showed to me, conscious as I was that I was almost the only being she felt anything like fondness to, made me love her, as it was natural; indeed, I am ashamed to say, that I fear I almost loved her better than both my parents put together. But there was an oddness, a silence about my aunt, which was never interrupted but by her occasional expressions of love to me, that made me stand in fear of her. An odd look from under her spectacles would sometimes scare me away when I had been peering up in her face to make her kiss me. Then she had a way of muttering to herself, which, though it was good words and religious words that she was mumbling, somehow I did not like. My weak spirits, and the fears I was subject to, always made me afraid of any personal singularity or oddness in any one. I am ashamed, ladies, to lay

open so many particulars of our family; but indeed it is necessary to the understanding of what I am going to tell you, of a very great weakness, if not wickedness, which I was guilty of towards my aunt. But I must return to my studies, and tell you what books I found in the closet, and what reading I chiefly admired. There was a great *Book of Martyrs* in which I used to read, or rather I used to spell out meanings; for I was too ignorant to make out many words; but there it was written all about those good men who chose to be burned alive rather than forsake their religion and become naughty Papists. Some words I could make out, some I could not; but I made out enough to fill my little head with vanity, and I used to think I was so courageous I could be burned too, and I would put my hands upon the flames which were pictured in the pretty pictures which the book had, and feel them; but you know, ladies, there is a great difference between the flames in a picture and real fire, and I am now ashamed of the conceit which I had of my own courage, and think how poor a martyr I should have made in those days. Then there was a book not so big; but it had pictures in it; it was called Culpepper's *Herbal;* it was full of pictures of plants and herbs, but I did not much care for that. Then there was Salmon's *Modern History,* out of which I picked a good deal. It had pictures of Chinese gods, and the great hooded serpent, which ran strangely in my fancy. There were some law books

too, but the old English frightened me from reading them. But above all, what I relished was Stackhouse's *History of the Bible*, where there was the picture of the ark, and all the beasts getting into it. This delighted me, because it puzzled me, and many an aching head have I got with poring into it, and contriving how it might be built, with such and such rooms to hold all the world if there should be another flood, and sometimes settling what pretty beasts should be saved and what should not, for I would have no ugly or deformed beast in my pretty ark. But this was only a piece of folly and vanity that a little reflection might cure me of. Foolish girl that I was! to suppose that any creature is really ugly that has all its limbs contrived with heavenly wisdom, and was doubtless formed to some beautiful end, though a child cannot comprehend it. Doubtless a frog or a toad is not uglier in itself than a squirrel or a pretty green lizard; but we want understanding to see it.

[*Here I must remind you, my dear Miss Howe, that one of the young ladies smiled and two or three were seen to titter at this part of your narration, and you seemed, I thought, a little too angry for a girl of your sense and reading; but you will remember, my dear, that young heads are not always able to bear strange and unusual assertions; and if some elder person, possibly, or some book which you had found, had not put it into your head, you would hardly have*

discovered by your own reflection that a frog or a toad was equal in real loveliness to a frisking squirrel, or a pretty green lizard, as you called it; not remembering that at this very time you gave the lizard the name of pretty, *and left it out to the frog —so liable we are all to prejudices. But you went on with your story.*]

These fancies, ladies, were not so very foolish or naughty, perhaps, but they may be forgiven in a child of six years old; but what I am going to tell, I shall be ashamed of, and repent, I hope, as long as I live. It will teach me not to form rash judgments. Besides the picture of the ark, and many others which I have forgot, Stackhouse contained one picture which made more impression upon my childish understanding than all the rest. It was the picture of the raising up of Samuel, which I used to call the Witch of Endor picture. I was always very fond of picking up stories about witches. There was a book called *Glanvil on Witches,* which used to lie about in this closet; it was thumbed about, and showed it had been much read in former times. This was my treasure. Here I used to pick out the strangest stories. My not being able to read them very well probably made them appear more strange and out of the way to me. But I could collect enough to understand that witches were old women who gave themselves up to do mischief—how by the help of spirits as bad as themselves they lamed

cattle, and made the corn not grow; and how they made images of wax to stand for people that had done them any injury, or they thought had done them injury; and how they burned the images before a slow fire, and stuck pins in them; and the persons which these waxen images represented, however far distant, felt all the pains and torments in good earnest, which were inflicted in show upon these images; and such a horror I had of these wicked witches, that though I am now better instructed, and look upon all these stories as mere idle tales, and invented to fill people's heads with nonsense, yet I cannot recall to mind the horrors which I then felt without shuddering, and feeling something of the old fit return.

[*Here, my dear Miss Howe, you may remember that Miss M——, the youngest of our party, showing some more curiosity than usual, I winked upon you to hasten to your story, lest the terrors which you were describing should make too much impression upon a young head, and you kindly understood my sign, and said less upon the subject of your fears than I fancy you first intended.*]

This foolish book of witch stories had no pictures in it, but I made up for them out of my own fancy, and out of the great picture of the raising up of Samuel in Stackhouse. I was not old enough to understand the difference there was between these silly improbable tales, which imputed such powers to

poor old women, who are the most helpless things in the creation, and the narrative in the Bible, which does not say that the witch, or pretended witch, raised up the dead body of Samuel by her own power; but, as it clearly appears, he was permitted by the divine will to appear to confound the presumption of Saul; and that the witch herself was really as much frightened and confounded at the miracle as Saul himself, not expecting a real appearance; but probably having prepared some juggling, sleight-of-hand tricks and sham appearance to deceive the eyes of Saul: whereas she, nor any one living, had never the power to raise the dead to life, but only He who made them from the first. These reasons I might have read in Stackhouse itself if I had been old enough, and have read them in that very book since I was older, but at that time I looked at little beyond the picture.

These stories of witches so terrified me, that my sleeps were broken, and in my dreams I always had a fancy of a witch being in the room with me. I know now that it was only nervousness; but though I can laugh at it now as well as you, ladies, if you knew what I suffered, you would be thankful that you have had sensible people about you to instruct you and teach you better. I was let grow up wild like an ill weed, and thrived accordingly. One night that I had been terrified in my sleep with my imaginations, I got out of bed and crept softly to the adjoining room. My room was next to where my

aunt usually sat when she was alone. Into her room I crept for relief from my fears. The old lady was not yet retired to rest, but was sitting with her eyes half-open, half-closed; her spectacles tottering upon her nose; her head nodding over her prayer-book; her lips mumbling the words as she read them, or half-read them in her dozing posture; her grotesque appearance; her old-fashioned dress, resembling what I had seen in that fatal picture in Stackhouse; all this, with the dead time of night, as it seemed to me (for I had gone through my first sleep), joined to produce a wicked fancy in me, that the form which I had beheld was not my aunt, but some witch. Her mumbling of her prayers confirmed me in this shocking idea. I had read in Glanvil of those wicked creatures reading their prayers *backwards*, and I thought that this was the operation which her lips were at this time employed about. Instead of flying to her friendly lap for that protection which I had so often experienced when I have been weak and timid, I shrunk back terrified and bewildered to my bed, where I lay in broken sleeps and miserable fancies till the morning, which I had so much reason to wish for, came. My fancies a little wore away with the light, but an impression was fixed, which could not for a long time be done away. In the daytime, when my father and mother were about the house, when I saw them familiarly speak to my aunt, my fears all vanished; and when the good creature has taken me upon her knees and shown

me any kindness more than ordinary, at such times I have melted into tears and longed to tell her what naughty foolish fancies I had had of her. But when night returned, that figure which I had seen recurred —the posture, the half-closed eyes, the mumbling and muttering which I had heard—a confusion was in my head, *who* it was I had seen that night:—it was my aunt, and it was not my aunt:—it was that good creature, who loved me above all the world, engaged at her good task of devotions—perhaps praying for some good to me. Again, it was a witch —a creature hateful to God and man, reading backwards the good prayers; who would perhaps destroy me. In these conflicts of mind I passed several weeks, till, by a revolution in my fate, I was removed to the house of a female relation of my mother's, in a distant part of the country, who had come on a visit to our house, and observing my lonely ways, and apprehensive of the ill effect of my mode of living upon my health, begged leave to take me home to her house to reside for a short time. I went with some reluctance at leaving my closet, my dark walk, and even my aunt, who had been such a source of both love and terror to me. But I went, and soon found the grand effects of a change of scene. Instead of melancholy closets and lonely avenues of trees, I saw lightsome rooms and cheerful faces; I had companions of my own age; no books were allowed me but what were rational and sprightly; that gave me mirth or gave me instruction. I soon

learned to laugh at witch stories; and when I returned after three or four months' absence to our own house, my good aunt appeared to me in the same light in which I had viewed her from my infancy, before that foolish fancy possessed me, or rather, I should say, more kind, more fond, more loving than before. It is impossible to say how much good that lady, the kind relation of my mother's that I spoke of, did to me by changing the scene. Quite a new turn of ideas was given to me; I became sociable and companionable; my parents soon discovered a change in me, and I have found a similar alteration in them. They have been plainly more fond of me since that change, as from that time I learned to conform myself more to their way of living. I have never since had that aversion to company and going out with them which used to make them regard me with less fondness than they would have wished to show. I impute almost all that I had to complain of in their neglect to my having been a little, unsociable, uncompanionable mortal. I lived in this manner for a year or two, passing my time between our house and the lady's who so kindly took me in hand, till, by her advice, I was sent to this school;—where I have told you, ladies, what for fear of ridicule I never ventured to tell any person besides, the story of my foolish and naughty fancy.

THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTER

CHARLOTTE WILMOT

UNTIL I was eleven years of age my life was one continued series of indulgence and delight. My father was a merchant, and supposed to be in very opulent circumstances, at least I thought so, for at a very early age I perceived that we lived in a more expensive way than any of my father's friends did. It was not the pride of birth, of which, Miss Withers, you once imagined you might justly boast, but the mere display of wealth that I was early taught to set an undue value on. My parents spared no cost for masters to instruct me; I had a French governess, and also a woman-servant whose sole business it was to attend on me. My playroom was crowded with toys, and my dress was the admiration of all my youthful visitors, to whom I gave balls and entertainments as often as I pleased. I looked down on all my young companions as my inferiors; but I chiefly assumed airs of superiority over Maria Hartley, whose father was a clerk in my father's counting-house, and therefore I concluded she would regard the fine show I made with more envy and admiration than any other of my companions. In the days of my humiliation, which I too soon experienced, I was thrown on the bounty of her father for support. To be a dependant on the charity of her family seemed the heaviest evil that could have befallen me; for I remembered how often

I had displayed my finery and my expensive ornaments, on purpose to enjoy the triumph of my superior advantages; and, with shame I now speak it, I have often glanced at her plain linen frock, when I showed her my beautiful ball-dresses. Nay, I once gave her a hint, which she so well understood that she burst into tears, that I could not invite her to some of my parties because her mamma once sent her on my birthday in a coloured frock. I cannot now think of my want of feeling without excessive pain; but one day I saw her highly amused with some curious toys, and on her expressing the pleasure the sight of them gave her, I said, "Yes, they are very well for those who are not accustomed to these things; but, for my part, I have so many, I am tired of them, and I am quite delighted to pass an hour in the empty closet your mamma allows you to receive your visitors in, because there is nothing there to interrupt the conversation."

Once, as I have said, Maria was betrayed into tears; now that I insulted her by calling her own small apartment an empty closet, she turned quick upon me, but not in anger, saying, "Oh, my dear Miss Wilmot, how very sorry I am"—— Here she stopped; and though I knew not the meaning of her words, I felt it as a reproof. I hung down my head abashed; yet perceiving that she was all that day more kind and obliging than ever, and being conscious of not having merited this kindness, I thought she was mean-spirited, and therefore I con-

soled myself with having discovered this fault in her, for I thought my arrogance was full as excusable as her meanness.

In a few days I knew my error; I learned why Maria had been so kind, and why she had said she was sorry. It was for me, proud disdainful girl that I was, that she was sorry; she knew, though I did not, that my father was on the brink of ruin; and it came to pass, as she feared it would, that in a few days my playroom was as empty as Maria's closet, and all my grandeur was at an end.

My father had what is called an execution in the house; everything was seized that we possessed. Our splendid furniture, and even our wearing apparel, all my beautiful ball-dresses, my trinkets, and my toys, were taken away by my father's merciless creditors. The week in which this happened was such a scene of hurry, confusion, and misery, that I will not attempt to describe it.

At the end of a week I found that my father and mother had gone out very early in the morning. Mr. Hartley took me home to his own house, and I expected to find them there; but, oh! what anguish did I feel, when I heard him tell Mrs. Hartley they had quitted England, and that he had brought me home to live with them. In tears and sullen silence I passed the first day of my entrance into this despised house. Maria was from home. All the day I sat in a corner of the room grieving for the departure of my parents; and if for a moment I forgot

that sorrow, I tormented myself with imagining the many ways which Maria might invent to make me feel in return the slights and airs of superiority which I had given myself over her. Her mother began the prelude to what I expected, for I heard her freely censure the imprudence of my parents. She spoke in whispers; yet, though I could not hear every word, I made out the tenor of her discourse. She was very anxious, lest her husband should be involved in the ruin of our house. He was the chief clerk in my father's counting-house. Towards evening he came in and quieted her fears by the welcome news that he had obtained a more lucrative situation than the one he had lost.

At eight in the evening Mrs. Hartley said to me, "Miss Wilmot, it is time for you to be in bed, my dear"; and ordered the servant to show me upstairs, adding that she supposed she must assist me to undress, but that when Maria came home, she must teach me to wait on myself. The apartment in which I was to sleep was at the top of the house. The walls were white-washed, and the roof was sloping. There was only one window in the room, a small casement, through which the bright moon shone, and it seemed to me the most melancholy sight I had ever beheld. In broken and disturbed slumbers I passed the night. When I awoke in the morning, she whom I most dreaded to see, Maria, who I supposed had envied my former state, and who I now felt certain would exult over my present mortifying

reverse of fortune, stood by my bedside. She awakened me from a dream, in which I thought she was ordering me to fetch her something: and on my refusal, she said I must obey her, for I was now her servant. Far differently from what my dreams had pictured did Maria address me! She said in the gentlest tone imaginable, "My dear Miss Wilmot, my mother begs you will come down to breakfast; will you give me leave to dress you?" My proud heart would not suffer me to speak, and I began to attempt to put on my clothes; but never having been used to do anything for myself, I was unable to perform it, and was obliged to accept of the assistance of Maria. She dressed me, washed my face, and combed my hair; and as she did these services for me, she said in a most respectful manner, "Is this the way you like to wear this, Miss Wilmot?" or, "Is this the way you like this done?" and courtesied as she gave me every fresh article to put on. The slights I expected to receive from Maria would not have distressed me more than the delicacy of her behaviour did. I hung down my head with shame and anguish.

In a few days Mrs. Hartley ordered her daughter to instruct me in such useful works and employments as Maria knew. Of everything which she called useful I was most ignorant. My accomplishments I found were held in small estimation here, by all indeed, except Maria. She taught me nothing without the kindest apologies for being obliged

to teach me, who, she said, was so excellent in all elegant arts; and was for ever thanking me for the pleasure she had formerly received from my skill in music and pretty fancy works. The distress I was in made these complimentary speeches not flatteries, but sweet drops of comfort to my degraded heart, almost broken with misfortune and remorse.

I remained at Mr. Hartley's but two months; for at the end of that time my father inherited a considerable property by the death of a distant relation, which has enabled him to settle his affairs. He established himself again as a merchant; but as he wished to retrench his expenses, and begin the world again on a plan of strict economy, he sent me to this school to finish my education.

SUSAN YATES

I WAS born and brought up in a house in which my parents had all their lives resided, which stood in the midst of that lonely tract of land called the Lincolnshire Fens. Few families besides our own lived near the spot, both because it was reckoned an unwholesome air, and because its distance from any town or market made it an inconvenient situation. My father was in no very affluent circumstances, and it was a sad necessity which he was put to of having to go many miles to fetch anything from the nearest village, which was full seven miles

distant, through a sad miry way that at all times made it heavy walking, and after rain was almost impassable. But he had no horse or carriage of his own.

The church which belonged to the parish in which our house was situated stood in this village; and its distance being, as I said before, seven miles from our house, made it quite an impossible thing for my mother or me to think of going to it. Sometimes, indeed, on a fine dry Sunday my father would rise early, and take a walk to the village, just to see how *goodness thrived*, as he used to say; but he would generally return tired, and the worse for his walk. It is scarcely possible to explain to any one who has not lived in the Fens what difficult and dangerous walking it is. A mile is as good as four, I have heard my father say, in those parts. My mother, who in the early part of her life had lived in a more civilised spot, and had been used to constant church-going, would often lament her situation. It was from her I early imbibed a great curiosity and anxiety to see that thing which I had heard her call a church, and so often lament that she could never go to. I had seen houses of various structures, and had seen in pictures the shapes of ships and boats, and palaces and temples, but never rightly anything that could be called a church, or that could satisfy me about its form. Sometimes I thought it must be like our house, and sometimes I fancied it must be more like the house of our neighbour, Mr. Sutton,

which was bigger and handsomer than ours. Sometimes I thought it was a great hollow cave, such as I have heard my father say the first inhabitants of the earth dwelt in. Then I thought it was like a waggon, or a cart, and that it must be something movable. The shape of it ran in my mind strangely, and one day I ventured to ask my mother what was that foolish thing she was always longing to go to, and which she called a church. Was it anything to eat or drink, or was it only like a great huge plaything to be seen and stared at?—I was not quite five years of age when I made this inquiry.

This question, so oddly put, made my mother smile; but in a little time she put on a more grave look, and informed me that a church was nothing that I had supposed it, but it was a great building, far greater than any house which I had seen, where men and women and children came together twice a day on Sundays, to hear the Bible read, and make good resolutions for the week to come. She told me that the fine music which we sometimes heard in the air came from the bells of St. Mary's Church, and that we never heard it but when the wind was in a particular point. This raised my wonder more than all the rest; for I had somehow conceived that the noise which I heard was occasioned by birds up in the air, or that it was made by the angels, whom (so ignorant I was till that time) I had always considered to be a sort of birds; for before this time I was totally ignorant of anything like religion, it

being a principle of my father that young heads should not be told too many things at once, for fear they should get confused ideas and no clear notions of anything. We had always indeed so far observed Sundays, that no work was done upon that day, and upon that day I wore my best muslin frock, and was not allowed to sing or to be noisy; but I never understood why that day should differ from any other. We had no public meetings: indeed, the few straggling houses which were near us would have furnished but a slender congregation; and the loneliness of the place we lived in, instead of making us more sociable, and drawing us closer together, as my mother used to say it ought to have done, seemed to have the effect of making us more distant and averse to society than other people. One or two good neighbours indeed we had, but not in numbers to give me an idea of church attendance.

But now my mother thought it high time to give me some clearer instruction in the main points of religion, and my father came readily into her plan. I was now permitted to sit up half an hour later on a Sunday evening that I might hear a portion of Scripture read, which had always been their custom, though by reason of my tender age, and my father's opinion on the impropriety of children being taught too young, I had never till now been an auditor. I was taught my prayers, and those things which you, ladies, I doubt not, had the benefit of being instructed in at a much earlier age.

The clearer my notions on these points became, they only made me more passionately long for the privilege of joining in that social service, from which it seemed that we alone, of all the inhabitants of the land, were debarred; and when the wind was in that point which enabled the sound of the distant bells of St. Mary's to be heard over the great moor which skirted our house, I have stood out in the air to catch the sounds, which I almost devoured; and the tears have come into my eyes when sometimes they seemed to speak to me almost in articulate sounds, to *come to church*, and because of the great moor which was between me and them, I could not come; and the too tender apprehensions of these things have filled me with a religious melancholy. With thoughts like these I entered into my seventh year.

And now the time was come when the great moor was no longer to separate me from the object of my wishes and of my curiosity. My father having some money left him by the will of a deceased relation, we ventured to set up a sort of a carriage—no very superb one, I assure you, ladies; but in that part of the world it was looked upon with some envy by our poorer neighbours. The first party of pleasure which my father proposed to take in it was to the village where I had so often wished to go, and my mother and I were to accompany him; for it was very fit, my father observed, that little Susan should go to church and learn how to behave herself, for

we might some time or other have occasion to live in London, and not always be confined to that out-of-the-way spot.

It was on a Sunday morning that we set out, my little heart beating with almost breathless expectation. The day was fine, and the roads as good as they ever are in those parts. I was so happy and so proud! I was lost in dreams of what I was going to see. At length the tall steeple of St. Mary's Church came in view. It was pointed out to me by my father, as the place from which that music had come, which I had heard over the moor, and had fancied to be angels singing. I was wound up to the highest pitch of delight at having visibly presented to me the spot from which had proceeded that unknown friendly music; and when it began to peal, just as we approached the village, it seemed to speak, *Susan is come*, as plainly as it used to invite me *to come*, when I heard it over the moor. I pass over our alighting at the house of a relation, and all that passed till I went with my father and mother to church.

St. Mary's Church is a great church for such a small village as it stands in. My father said it had been a cathedral, and that it had once belonged to a monastery, but the monks were all gone. Over the door there was stonework, representing saints and bishops, and here and there, along the sides of the church, there were figures of men's heads made in a strange grotesque way: I have since seen the same sort of figures in the round tower of the

Temple Church in London. My father said they were very improper ornaments for such a place, and so I now think them; but it seems the people who built these great churches in old times gave themselves more liberties than they do now; and I remember that when I first saw them, and before my father had made this observation, though they were so ugly and out of shape, and some of them seem to be grinning and distorting their features with pain or with laughter, yet being placed upon a church, to which I had come with such serious thoughts, I could not help thinking they had some serious meaning; and I looked at them with wonder, but without any temptation to laugh. I somehow fancied they were the representation of wicked people set up as a warning.

When we got into the church, the service was not begun, and my father kindly took me round to show me the monuments and everything else remarkable. I remember seeing one of a venerable figure, which my father said had been a judge. The figure was kneeling, as if it was alive, before a sort of desk, with a book, I suppose the Bible, lying on it. I somehow fancied the figure had a sort of life in it, it seemed so natural, or that the dead judge that it was done for said his prayers at it still. This was a silly notion, but I was very young, and had passed my little life in a remote place, where I had never seen anything nor knew anything; and the awe which I felt at first being in a church took from

me all power but that of wondering. I did not reason about anything; I was too young. Now I understand why monuments are put up for the dead, and why the figures which are put upon them are described as doing the actions which they did in their life-times, and that they are a sort of pictures set up for our instruction. But all was new and surprising to me on that day—the long windows with little panes, the pillars, the pews made of oak, the little hassocks for the people to kneel on, the form of the pulpit, with the sounding-board over it, gracefully carved in flower-work. To you, who have lived all your lives in populous places, and have been taken to church from the earliest time you can remember, my admiration of these things must appear strangely ignorant. But I was a lonely young creature, that had been brought up in remote places, where there was neither church nor church-going inhabitants. I have since lived in great towns, and seen the ways of churches and of worship, and I am old enough now to distinguish between what is essential in religion, and what is merely formal or ornamental.

When my father had done pointing out to me the things most worthy of notice about the church, the service was almost ready to begin; the parishioners had most of them entered and taken their seats; and we were shown into a pew where my mother was already seated. Soon after the clergyman entered, and the organ began to play what is called the voluntary. I had never seen so many peo-

ple assembled before. At first I thought that all eyes were upon me, and that because I was a stranger. I was terribly ashamed and confused at first; but my mother helped me to find out the places in the prayer-book, and being busy about that took off some of my painful apprehensions. I was no stranger to the order of the service, having often read in the prayer-book at home, but my thoughts being confused, it puzzled me a little to find out the responses and other things, which I thought I knew so well; but I went through it tolerably well. One thing which has often troubled me since is, that I am afraid I was too full of myself and of thinking how happy I was, and what a privilege it was for one that was so young to join in the service with so many grown people, so that I did not attend enough to the instruction which I might have received. I remember I foolishly applied everything that was said to myself, so as it could mean nobody but myself, I was so full of my own thoughts. All that assembly of people seemed to me as if they were come together only to show me the way of a church. Not but I received some very affecting impressions from some things which I heard that day; but the standing up and sitting down of the people, the organ, the singing:—the way of all these things took up more of my attention than was proper; or I thought it did. I believe I behaved better, and was more serious when I went a second time, and a third time; for now we went as a regular thing

every Sunday, and continued to do so, till, by a still further change for the better in my father's circumstances, we removed to London. Oh! it was a happy day for me my first going to St. Mary's Church; before that day I used to feel like a little outcast in the wilderness, like one that did not belong to the world of Christian people. I have never felt like a little outcast since. But I never can hear the sweet noise of bells, that I don't think of the angels singing, and what poor but pretty thoughts I had of angels in my uninstructed solitude.

ARABELLA HARDY

I WAS born in the East Indies. I lost my father and mother young. At the age of five my relations thought it proper that I should be sent to England for my education. I was to be intrusted to the care of a young woman who had a character for great humanity and discretion; but just as I had taken leave of my friends, and we were about to take our passage, the young woman suddenly fell sick, and could not go on board. In this unpleasant emergency no one knew how to act. The ship was at the very point of sailing, and it was the last which was to sail for the season. At length the captain, who was known to my friends, prevailed upon my relation, who had come with us to see us embark, to leave the young woman on shore, and to let me

embark separately. There was no possibility of getting any other female attendant for me in the short time allotted for our preparation; and the opportunity of going by that ship was thought too valuable to be lost. No other ladies happened to be going, and so I was consigned to the care of the captain and his crew—rough and unaccustomed attendants for a young creature delicately brought up as I had been; but indeed they did their best to make me not feel the difference. The unpolished sailors were my nursery-maids and my waiting-women. Everything was done by the captain and the men to accommodate me, and make me easy. I had a little room made out of the cabin, which was to be considered as my room, and nobody might enter into it. The first mate had a great character for bravery and all sailor-like accomplishments; but with all this he had a gentleness of manners, and a pale feminine cast of face, from ill health and a weakly constitution, which subjected him to some ridicule from the officers, and caused him to be named Betsy. He did not much like the appellation, but he submitted to it the better, saying that those who gave him a woman's name well knew that he had a man's heart, and that in the face of danger he would go as far as any man. To this young man, whose real name was Charles Atkinson, by a lucky thought of the captain, the care of me was especially intrusted. Betsy was proud of his charge, and, to do him justice, acquitted himself with great diligence and adroitness

through the whole of the voyage. From the beginning I had somehow looked upon Betsy as a woman, hearing him so spoken of, and this reconciled me in some measure to the want of a maid which I had been used to. But I was a manageable girl at all times, and gave nobody much trouble.

I have not knowledge enough to give an account of my voyage, or to remember the names of the seas we passed through, or the lands which we touched upon in our course. The chief thing I can remember (for I do not recollect the events of the voyage in any order) was Atkinson taking me upon deck to see the great whales playing about in the sea. There was one great whale came bounding up out of the sea, and then he would dive into it again, and then would come up at a distance where nobody expected him, and another whale was following after him. Atkinson said they were at play, and that the lesser whale loved that bigger whale, and kept it company all through the wide seas; but I thought it strange play, and a frightful kind of love; for I every minute expected they would come up to our ship and toss it. But Atkinson said a whale was a gentle creature, and it was a sort of sea-elephant, and that the most powerful creatures in nature are always the least hurtful. And he told me how men went out to take these whales, and stuck long pointed darts into them; and how the sea was discoloured with the blood of these poor whales for many miles' distance; and I admired the courage of the men, but I was sorry

for the inoffensive whale. Many other pretty sights he used to show me, when he was not on watch, or doing some duty for the ship. No one was more attentive to his duty than he; but at such times as he had leisure he would show me all pretty sea-sights: —the dolphins and porpoises that came before a storm, and all the colours which the sea changed to; how sometimes it was a deep blue and then a deep green, and sometimes it would seem all on fire; all these various appearances he would show me, and attempt to explain the reason of them to me, as well as my young capacity would admit of. There were a lion and a tiger on board, going to England as a present to the king; and it was a great diversion to Atkinson and me, after I got rid of my first terrors, to see the ways of these beasts in their dens, and how venturous the sailors were in putting their hands through the grates, and patting their rough coats. Some of the men had monkeys, which ran loose about, and the sport was for the men to lose them and find them again. The monkeys would run up the shrouds, and pass from rope to rope, with ten times greater alacrity than the most experienced sailor could follow them; and sometimes they would hide themselves in the most unthought-of places, and when they were found, they would grin and make mouths, as if they had sense. Atkinson described to me the ways of these little animals in their native woods, for he had seen them. Oh, how many ways he thought of to amuse me in that long voyage!

Sometimes he would describe to me the odd shapes and varieties of fishes that were in the sea, and tell me tales of the sea-monsters that lay hid at the bottom, and were seldom seen by men; and what a glorious sight it would be, if our eyes could be sharpened to behold all the inhabitants of the sea at once swimming in the great deeps, as plain as we see the gold and silver fish in a bowl of glass. With such notions he enlarged my infant capacity to take in many things.

When in foul weather I have been terrified at the motion of the vessel, as it rocked backwards and forwards, he would still my fears, and tell me that I used to be rocked so once in a cradle, and that the sea was God's bed, and the ship our cradle, and we were as safe in that greater motion as when we felt that lesser one in our little wooden sleeping-places. When the wind was up, and sang through the sails, and disturbed me with its violent clamours, he would call it music, and bid me hark to the sea-organ, and with that name he quieted my tender apprehensions. When I have looked around with a mournful face at seeing all *men* about me, he would enter into my thoughts, and tell me pretty stories of his mother and his sisters, and a female cousin that he loved better than his sisters, whom he called Jenny, and say that when we got to England I should go and see them, and how fond Jenny would be of his little daughter, as he called me; and with these images of women and females which he raised in

my fancy, he quieted me for a while. One time, and never but once, he told me that Jenny had promised to be his wife if ever he came to England, but that he had his doubts whether he should live to get home, for he was very sickly. This made me cry bitterly.

That I dwell so long upon the attention of this Atkinson, is only because his death, which happened just before we got to England, affected me so much, that he alone of all the ship's crew has engrossed my mind ever since; though indeed the captain and all were singularly kind to me, and strove to make up for my uneasy and unnatural situation. The boatswain would pipe for my diversion, and the sailor-boy would climb the dangerous mast for my sport. The rough foremast-man would never willingly appear before me till he had combed his long black hair smooth and sleek, not to terrify me. The officers got up a sort of play for my amusement, and Atkinson, or, as they called him, Betsy, acted the heroine of the piece. All ways that could be contrived were thought upon to reconcile me to my lot. I was the universal favourite; I do not know how deservedly; but I suppose it was because I was alone, and there was no female in the ship besides me. Had I come over with female relations or attendants, I should have excited no particular curiosity; I should have required no uncommon attentions. I was one little woman among a crew of men; and I believe the homage which I have read that men universally pay

to women, was in this case directed to me in the absence of all other womenkind. I do not know how that might be, but I was a little princess among them, and I was not six years old.

I remember the first drawback which happened to my comfort was Atkinson's not appearing the whole of one day. The captain tried to reconcile me to it by saying that Mr. Atkinson was confined to his cabin; that he was not quite well, but a day or two would restore him. I begged to be taken in to see him, but this was not granted. A day, and then another came, and another, and no Atkinson was visible, and I saw apparent solicitude in the faces of all the officers, who nevertheless strove to put on their best countenances before me, and to be more than usually kind to me. At length, by the desire of Atkinson himself, as I have since learned, I was permitted to go into his cabin and see him. He was sitting up, apparently in a state of great exhaustion; but his face lighted up when he saw me, and he kissed me and told me that he was going a great voyage, far longer than that which we had passed together, and he should never come back; and though I was so young, I understood well enough that he meant this of his death, and I cried sadly; but he comforted me, and told me that I must be his little executrix, and perform his last will, and bear his last words to his mother and his sisters, and to his cousin Jenny, whom I should see in a short time; and he gave me his blessing, as a father would bless

his child, and he sent a last kiss by me to all his female relations, and he made me promise that I would go and see them when I got to England. And soon after this he died. But I was in another part of the ship when he died, and I was not told it till we got to shore, which was a few days after; but they kept telling me that he was better and better, and that I should soon see him, but that it disturbed him to talk with any one. Oh, what a grief it was when I learned that I had lost an old shipmate that had made an irksome situation so bearable by his kind assiduities; and to think that he was gone, and I could never repay him for his kindness!

When I had been a year and a half in England, the captain, who had made another voyage to India and back, thinking that time had alleviated a little the sorrow of Atkinson's relations, prevailed upon my friends who had the care of me in England to let him introduce me to Atkinson's mother and sisters. Jenny was no more; she had died in the interval, and I never saw her. Grief for his death had brought on a consumption, of which she lingered about a twelvemonth and then expired. But in the mother and the sisters of this excellent young man I have found the most valuable friends I possess on this side the great ocean. They received me from the captain as the little *protégée* of Atkinson, and from them I have learned passages of his former life; and this in particular, that the illness of which he died was brought on by a wound of which he

never quite recovered, which he got in the desperate attempt, when he was quite a boy, to defend his captain against a superior force of the enemy which had boarded him, and which, by his premature valour inspiriting the men, they finally succeeded in repulsing. This was that Atkinson who, from his pale and feminine appearance, was called Betsy; this was he whose womanly care of me got him the name of a woman; who, with more than female attention, condescended to play the handmaid to a little unaccompanied orphan that fortune had cast upon the care of a rough sea-captain and his rougher crew.

NOTES

NOTES

MRS. LEICESTER'S SCHOOL

(London, printed for M. J. Godwin, at the Juvenile Library, No. 41 Skinner Street, 1807)

THE joint composition of Charles and Mary Lamb, the stories told by *Maria Howe*, *Susan Yates*, and *Arabella Hardy*, being by Charles, and the remainder by Mary. No mention is to be found in Lamb's letters of the origin of this work; but it was certainly written at the suggestion of Godwin, for his series of children's books. It is interesting to trace in the scenes and incidents of the various stories recollections of the childish days of the brother and sister. The pretty village of Amwell, where the school is placed, was only some five miles from Blakesware. The story called *The Young Mahometan* contains Mary Lamb's own recollections of the old Family Seat of the Plumers, and her reference to the marble hall, the twelve Cæsars, the Hogarth prints, and the picture of the young shepherdess, may be put side by side with her brother's essay, "Blakesmoor in H——shire," and other allusions in letter and essay to the old mansion. The *Witch Aunt* (absurdly altered in modern editions to the much less expressive "Effect of Witch Stories"), is the first sketch of an experience afterwards elaborated by Lamb in the Elia Essay, *Witches and other Night Fears*. *Susan Yates*, the scene of which is laid in a village in the Lincolnshire Fens, was probably derived from the early recollections of old John Lamb, who had originally come up to London from Lincolnshire a poor boy to enter service, and who when he came in after years to live in the Temple would naturally love to compare the grotesque faces "in the round tower of the Temple Church" with those in

the old Minster Church of his native county. *The Changeling* is curious as illustrating the strong Shakspearian bias of the writers, shown in their resorting to the expedient of a play within a play, whereby to "catch the conscience" of the delinquent nurse. Perhaps the most perfect of the stories, in point of delicacy and humour, are *The Sea Voyage* of Charles and *The Father's Wedding-Day* of Mary. It was the latter which was Walter Savage Landor's special favourite. We have Lamb's own authority for the respective authorship of the various tales. "I wrote only the *Witch Aunt;* the *First going to Church;* and the final story about a little Indian girl in a ship."

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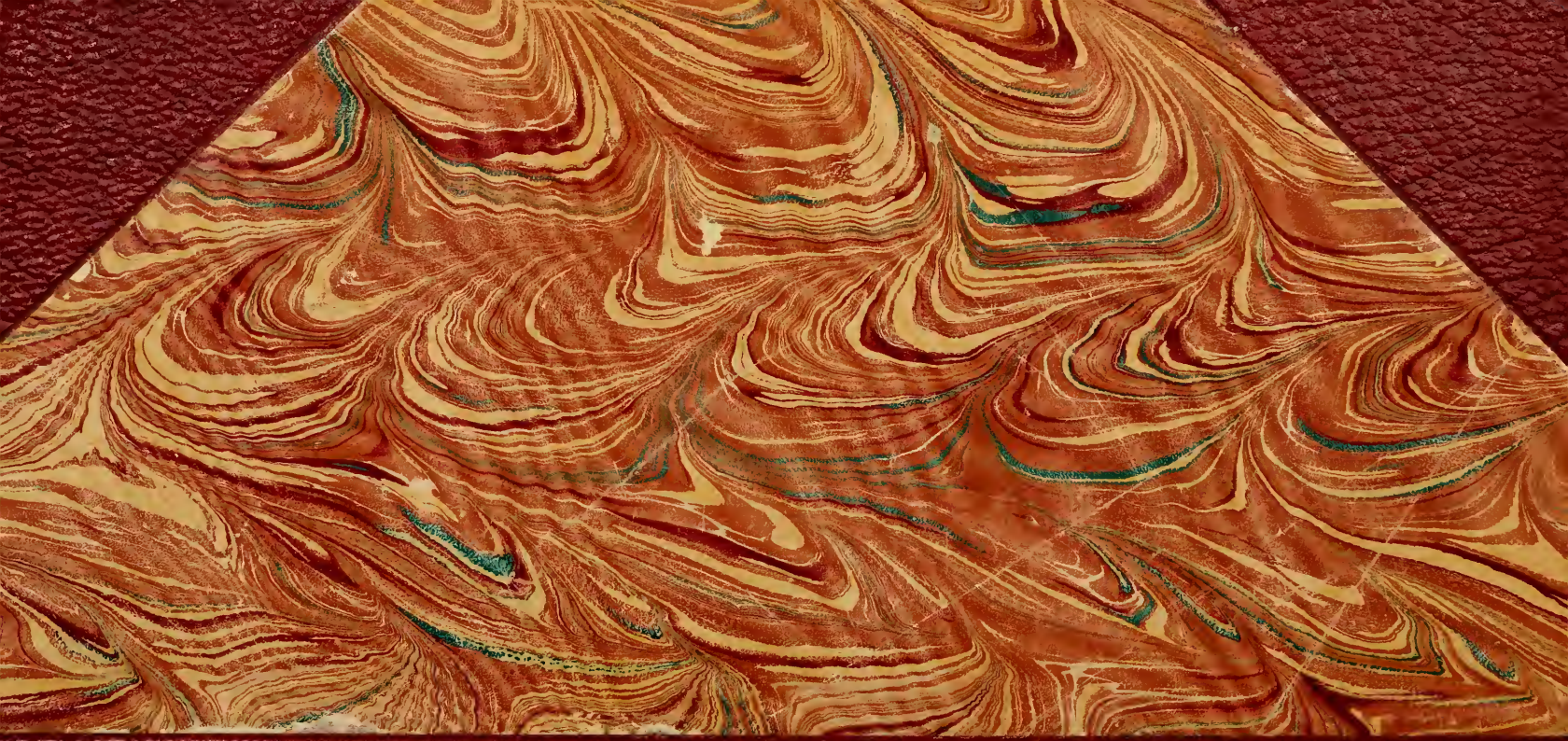
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